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THE TOLL OF THE BUSH.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ALTHOUGH Geoffrey Hernshaw had steeled himself to the point of enduring events with an impassive countenance, it is not improbable that he was glad of the plausible excuse to absent himself from the wedding which was to be found in the continually arriving reports of disaster from the settlement. The sympathetic captain of the steam-launch which carried subsidiary mail-streams from a dozen points on the river had offered him transport to the creek, promising, moreover, to stand by for any settlers who having lost their homes and possessions desired to seek refuge in the county township.

Although it was after ten o'clock when the boat arrived at its destination, a gleam of gum-torches on the little rickety wharf showed that their coming was not unexpected, and many were the blessings rained down on the head of the skipper who had not deserted them in their hour of need.

"Is that you, Geoffrey?" asked a shy, pleasant voice, as the young man ceased from assisting in the task of getting a large family and some miscellaneous bundles safely stowed on the deck of the little craft. The voice was so pleasant, and such a

friendly turn was given to his Christian name, that Geoffrey's sore heart was touched even while he wondered.

"Why, of course, Lena. How stupid of me not to guess! Where's Robert? Good heavens! have you been burnt out too?"

"No, no; we're all safe. The fire went on and left us; but Robert hadn't had any sleep for ages, what with fighting the fire for ourselves and other people. He was just worn out, poor boy; so after tea I got him to take off his boots for three minutes, and he's been asleep ever since."

"And what are you going to do here?"

"You have just done it for me. Those were my brothers and sisters you carried on to the boat, and that was my mother you took the bundles from."

"Is that so? I thought there was something angelic in the faces of those youngsters, and this shows how a good action may be its own reward."

The bustle on the wharf ceased presently; the last bundle, animate or inanimate, was put aboard. The captain stood stretching his legs by the gangway, chatting with the men-folk on their experiences, and regretting that he could not spare a few hours to run up and give them a hand. Snatches of their conversation

floated to Geoffrey and Lena as they stood on the land-end of the wharf, waiting the departure of the boat.

"Mark Gird hadn't been dead three hours." "Well, anyway, it's a strange thing that all the years he lay dying there was not a serious—" "Don't know how the idea got going, but the bushmen believed in it—" "One death since; yes, but that was fire—well, it may be nonsense, but the feeling comes over you at times and you can't get rid of it."

"I should have mentioned your loss, Lena. It was terrible, but it was heroic. No man could meet a more honourable end than to die a great death in the cause of humanity."

Lena put out her hand and pressed her brother-in-law's fingers, at once gratefully and restrainingly. "Please say no more, Geoffrey," she said; "God alone knows the secrets of that dreadful night"; and quick to grasp a hidden meaning in her words, Geoffrey was silent.

The little group stirred and parted. The captain stepped across the gangway, blew his whistle, and amid a chorus of good-byes the black hull slipped away into the darkness.

Lena shook her torch into brighter flame and turned towards the track. "What a terrible thing life is!" she said, with a seriousness that contrasted strangely with her sweet face and few years; "and yet every now and then you seem to see the finger of God intervening, as though to prevent it from being worse. Is it as He would have it? Or has He also to wrestle with a Power nearly as great as Himself?"

"Men have thought so, Lena; they have founded their religions on that hypothesis. But come, this is only the night, and to-morrow the sun will shine again. Give me the torch. Did the fire get down here?"

"No; the wind was off the water.

But all the lovely Bush between the road and Bald Hill—do you remember?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Ah! but you had only known it a few years. There is nothing left but the black trunks. Doesn't it seem sad? And I had known it all my life."

"Where else did it go?"

"It began just beyond Mr. Beckwith's. You can hardly see where the house stood now. Then it spread to Flotter's, and they lost everything too. It missed Green's place, except the Bush near the front; but it crossed the road there, and spread right along in front of us. You never saw such a sight; and if the wind hadn't been in our favour, and the house so far back from the road, it must have shrivelled up where it stood. The fence was alight in a dozen places at once, and at last we had simply to let it burn and run for our lives, the heat was so terrible. After that the fire seemed just to leap through the settlement. It crossed back to the riverside and burnt out the Finnertys and Robinsons. Mrs. Robinson saved herself and the Finnerty children in the cattle-tank, and now the men are going about the settlement with their arms round one another's necks, the best friends in the world. It made a clean sweep of everything right down to Girds' Bush, and there for the moment it stopped."

Lena stopped also, and pushing open the charred and twisted remnant of the picket-gate, led her brother-in-law toward the house. At scattered points around fires gleamed, where fallen logs, long since buried in vegetation, were being slowly consumed. Under the close-drawn screen of the night monstrous smoke-wreaths crawled, fading spectrally as they receded from the glowing arch

of conflagration in the west. At intervals a clot of flame showed above the tree-tops, the sky lightening and darkening like a winking eye.

Leading the way softly into the house, Lena turned up the lamp and indicated a seat on the sofa. "I will just go and have a peep at my boy," she whispered, "then we can tell one another all the news."

When she returned she brought some sheets and hung them on a chair before the fire. "He hasn't moved," she said. "He was just dying for a sleep. He has done wonders, and the settlers have said such nice things to me about him."

"Robert is not one to spare himself," Geoffrey said.

Lena busied herself in preparing food for her guest, then with housewifely care she turned the sheets, and at last came and sat down beside him.

Geoffrey had watched her movements with contented eyes, and a relaxing of the tense self-repression under which for months he had existed. The grace and beauty of the young wife were delightful to witness; but it was her kindness, her thoughtfulness for others, her complete self-unconsciousness which warmed his heart towards her. So, though in his acute distress of mind he had desire neither for food nor speech, he accepted both from his brother's wife with a pathetic gratitude.

"I thought it very likely you would come through to-day," Lena said, as she took her seat, "and so I tidied your room in readiness."

"Yet I received Robert's note and knew that you at least were all right."

"It was not on account of what was happening here that I expected you," Lena said wistfully.

Geoffrey shrank as from the touch-

ing of a raw wound; even that tender sympathy was as yet unbearable. "You were telling me about the Girds," he said quickly.

"Mark Gird is dead,—did you know? He died on Tuesday night. Dr. Webber was there from the township and told us on Wednesday morning. The fire was burning then, and whether any one went to see poor Mrs. Gird or not I don't know. And after that no one could get there by the track, because the fire was all round."

"I thought you told me it stopped at Gird's Bush!"

"Yes; but, if you remember, their section only begins half-way down the track, and the strange thing is, that it stopped dead short there when there was nothing to prevent it going on."

"They say that Bush-fires do behave in that unaccountable way at times, crossing apparently impossible gaps, and checking at nothing at all."

"Well, everybody thinks this is particularly strange," said Lena; "and they are saying that the fire will not cross the boundary so long as Mr. Gird's body remains there."

Geoffrey smiled at her earnestness. "That is framing a theory to account for facts with a vengeance," he said. "And has no one been through to the house yet?"

"Oh yes; Robert and some others were there this morning. You can get through now quite easily. The body is to be brought out to-morrow evening. I am going there in the morning myself. Poor Mrs. Gird!" added Lena, her eyes brightening with unshed tears. "It seems so cruel that she who was always ready to help others should in her own trouble have been left quite alone."

"That appears to have been unavoidable, and I hardly think she would have had it otherwise could she

have chosen. There are some people to whom it is difficult to offer an acceptable sympathy, and I doubt if I should have found a word to say to Mrs. Gird."

"Well, I don't think the men said much. They took up some planks with them and made a coffin, and they decorated the outhouse with palm-leaves and fern-fronds and put a sprig of *kowhai* over the door, and left him alone. Mrs. Gird made them some tea, and asked after every one, and seemed quite cheerful, Robertsaid."

Geoffrey was silent awhile. "Where is the fire now?" he asked at length.

"Where isn't it?" returned Lena. "It has gone right along the road and crossed at half a dozen places into the big Bush. Then it is working back towards the upper settlement on this side, and unless it is checked somewhere they will have to fire the beautiful Bush behind the school-house to save the building. Robert would have been there now if I hadn't persuaded him to take a few minutes' rest." Lena looked smilingly at her brother-in-law.

"Happy Robert!" said he.

"Now it is your turn to tell me the news," said Lena, lowering her eyes. "We hear that Wairangi is so full that people are camping out on the beach."

"That is so far true that the natives have a camp under the Christmas trees."

"And Eve will be married to-morrow!"

"Yes."

Lena stroked her hands nervously. Her old childish awe of her husband's brother was not quite extinct, but the worship of one man gives a woman confidence in dealing with others. "We hoped it would never come off," she said at last; "we hoped you would prevent it."

"Ah, Lena, it is not every woman who is kind as well as lovely."

"Why didn't you marry her, Geoffrey?" his sister-in-law asked coaxingly.

"Did I have the opportunity?"

"Did you not? What was it came between you at the last?"

"Madness, false report, lying, pride, —all the deadly things that lie in wait for happiness."

"Tell me."

"Some day, perhaps."

"Tell me now."

He looked into the fair, sympathetic face and found it irresistible. And after the first effort, when once the gates of reserve were fairly broken down, the task proved less difficult than he had anticipated. He told his story with a certain plainness and an absence of comment from his tones which were perhaps remarkable enough. Shades of anger and bitterness there may have been, but a quick intelligence is a stern disciplinarian, and from the taint of self-pity the tale was wholly free. For all emotion his voice betrayed he might have been relating the story of another man; yet the bare facts were sufficiently unkind, and Lena's tender heart was moved to pity.

"What a cruel thing!" she exclaimed, gazing at him with tearful eyes. "And oh, Geoffrey, the pity of it if nothing can be done to put it right!"

"Nothing can be done."

"Do you think Mr. Fletcher really believed it was true, or did he only make use of it for his own purposes?"

"He had my assurance that it was false. Many months ago, shortly after the rumour first reached me, he gave me reason to think that he had heard the story and believed it. I wrote to him at once, requesting the thing should be put in plain words,

and challenging an investigation of the facts. He never replied."

Lena sat looking at the lamp, the expression of her face changing momentarily. Presently she gave a little shiver. "I was once very unkind to Robert for a long while," she said. "I thought it would be best for him to give me up, but I made him miserable, and ah, how miserable I made myself! How my heart did ache! How hard and terrible the world seemed then! Do you think she may be suffering like that?"

"God forbid!" Geoffrey said fervently. "But ask yourself, Lena," he added a moment later, "whether it is likely. You loved Robert, but I have no assurance that she ever cared for me. Could she have done this thing if she had? Look into your own heart and answer me."

"Yes," said Lena after a pause, "it is possible. In a moment of insane jealousy a woman could do that."

"And stand to it?"

"She could be held to it."

"Even supposing the thing had been true, why should she be jealous of the past?"

"Why should one be jealous of the future, of the present,—why at all?"

"Yes, that was well said. After all, there is no justice in demanding that her feelings should be different from my own in the same circumstances."

He was silent after that, and Lena, searching vainly through the maze for a loophole of escape, was silent also.

The following day the brothers were up before daylight. Early as they were, Lena had the fire burning and breakfast ready for them when they appeared; and after breakfast, as it was possible they might not find time to return in the middle of the day, she cut them some lunch with

her own housewifely hands. More was to depend on this precaution than any of the three at that time imagined.

Through the long morning hours and until midway in the afternoon the fierce conflict raged round the upper settlement. Not only were the school-house and newly erected Wesleyan church in danger, but also the homes of a dozen settlers, who, ere the day was well advanced, found themselves surrounded by a zone of fire. The danger to most of them lay in the conflagration spreading through the dry grass, and more than half the available labour had to be devoted to thrashing out the insidious, all but invisible menace from this source. For the rest there was the herculean task of holding the monster in check in the Bush itself. A track was selected cutting through the arm of Bush which projected into the settlement, and from this point the undergrowth was fired and again thrashed out. No water was available had it been possible to use it, and the only weapons of the defenders were branches of young tea-tree continually renewed. The phenomenally dry season had withered the undergrowth to the point when it was only necessary to drop a lighted match to arouse a conflagration. A hundred times it seemed that the fires of their own making must break away from them and become their masters in place of their servants; but scorched and suffocating, with labouring breasts and aching arms, the band stood heroically to its work, and in the end the victory was theirs. The mighty conflagration sweeping up towards them suffered a sudden check. For awhile it licked at the lofty foliage and sought to sweep over what it could no longer undermine, but in half an hour the danger had passed and the settlement was saved.

Geoffrey stood alone, hot and exhausted, hearing to right and left the triumphant cries of the settlers. Already with the cessation of toil the exhilaration of the last few hours was dying away. He heard advancing footsteps and moved onward through the fire-blackened trees in the direction of the road. He could condole with them in their despair, but in their triumph he desired no partnership. Soon their voices faded away and he was alone. He looked at his watch and noted that it was past three o'clock. By this time Eve would be married, probably have begun her wedding-journey. He glanced at his soiled rough clothing and blackened hands, contrasting them with the doubtless immaculate person and attire of the bridegroom. "Damn him!" he muttered savagely.

Now and then his steps took him through a little green jungle, left miraculously like an oasis in the general desert. Whither he was going or why he had no idea; a torturing unrest possessed and drove him forward. Yet afterwards when they came to track his path through the ashes it was seen that he had moved with a strange directness to a certain point on the road. Before that point was reached he was in the midst of the burning forest, not unconscious of danger nor actually indifferent to it, seeing the fires closing in on his tracks and, as it were, pushing him forward. Yet when he came to the road he had but to descend the cutting and step across to comparative safety. He stood looking about him. To the left a huge tree had fallen across the way and was crackling and blazing merrily; to the right his view was cut off by a sharp bend in the road, round which volumes of smoke were rolling. He stepped down and began to make his way across.

Nothing was visible in the hollow round the bend, but a deep roaring sound showed that in that direction the fire had gained a good hold. He paused a moment to consider his course. The road to the settlement ran under the burning tree and was clearly impassable. It would be needful to enter the Bush and strike the road farther along. Suddenly he turned his head quickly and looked into the rolling smoke.

Was it possible that amid the continuous uproar he detected the sound of galloping hoofs? Yes,—there was no mistaking that frantic clatter, momentarily growing nearer, thundering out of the darkness to meet him. He stepped quickly aside as horse and rider burst through the smother of smoke, swept past him and reined up abruptly in the clearer atmosphere between him and the fallen tree. He could see the whites of the horse's eyes as it reared and wheeled. He had time also to note the perfect seat of the rider ere she turned to look at him.

Then, like a man who hears the end of a dream and fears awakening, Geoffrey Hernshaw moved towards her.

CHAPTER XXXII.

EVE was on her feet by the time he reached her. Her face was deathly pale. Is the road impassable?" she asked at once.

"For the horse quite." Geoffrey possessed himself of the reins of the plunging animal despite a movement on the girl's part to resist the attention.

"And it is not possible to turn back? Then what is to be done with the horse?"

Geoffrey looked round and shrugged his shoulders. "Freedom is the only chance for him, Miss Milward."

"I was married this morning," she said quickly.

Geoffrey removed the saddle and bridle and turned the horse loose. He made no comment, nor did he look at her as he said brusquely, "Where do you wish to go to?"

"I was on my way to Mrs. Gird's, but if that is impossible—"

"Mrs. Gird's is as possible as anywhere else from here. Wherever we go we have only the alternatives of the Bush or the fire. You shall say which it is to be."

"How did you get here yourself?"

Geoffrey pointed up the bank.

"Return that way, however, is no more possible than it is by the way you have come."

The girl stood silent. The horse after snuffing the wind had entered the Bush and was breaking his way noisily through the undergrowth.

"Show me the way then," she said at last.

He took a step forward and paused.

"There is no way, and I know the direction no better than yourself. It is best you should understand that clearly. The Bush is thick and rough, and there may be difficulty in getting through."

"You have said there is no alternative."

"I was wrong; there is one. We can stay here on the chance that the fire will burn itself out before it reaches us. When there is a certainty that it will not we can take to the Bush."

"By that time we shall probably be in darkness."

"Yes, that is inevitable."

"Then let us go now while we have the daylight."

Geoffrey turned and led the way into the jungle. For all his set face there was the glow of an Indian summer in his heart. To him, and not to her husband, was given the

blessed privilege to help her in her hour of need, and if the moments of their companionship were destined to be few, they should at least be unforgettable while life lasted. Yet he moved forward in silence, only occasionally pausing to hold aside some obstacle from her path or to assure himself that she was close behind him.

At first the Bush was intersected by cattle-tracks running in all directions, most of them formed during the winter when the soft roads were all but impassable, and by taking advantage of these he hoped either to strike the road or to arrive in the vicinity of the Girds' section. But in this idea he had reckoned without the fire, which, having crossed the road at several intervening points, was slowly eating its way into the dark unvisited depths. Time after time they were forced from the direct course and pushed farther back into the forest.

Not every man born in a Bush country becomes a good bushman, and to many a long-time dweller in cities has it fallen in time of need to demonstrate that the faculty of direction is as much a gift as that of mathematics. But Geoffrey Hernshaw was not of these, nor did he possess the long experience which might serve in the absence of the finer quality. So long as they kept to the tracks, even though they were those of mere beasts, their case was not hopeless, but in the confidence that he moved in the right direction, and tempted, as many a poor victim has been before him, by a stretch of country easier than the track seemed to afford, he made the fatal mistake of attempting to break fresh ground in the jungle. Then, as it were, a net spread for their feet, and the great mysterious forest closed silently upon them.

It was long ere they discovered it,

and meanwhile their progress increased in difficulties and deviations. At first the girl resisted the proffered assistance of her companion. She had pinned up her riding-habit, and though suffering more inconvenience than the man, her physical strength and experience in many a Bush ramble served her now in good stead. Yet his assistance was at times inevitable. Twice with trembling fingers he extricated her skirt from the spines of the *tataramoa*¹; once she gave him an icy cold hand in stepping from one moss-grown trunk to another; and once she allowed him to lift her down a steep rock in a ravine, and then he was aware of the rapid beating of her heart, and the extreme pallor of her face.

"Is it peace between us, Eve, at last?" he asked.

"Yes," she said and stood still, looking at him with strange eyes.

When all is said as to the mistakes of those first few hours, there remains the distraction of their thoughts to account it may be for everything.

The inevitable moment arrived at last. With great difficulty they ascended the other side of the ravine, only to find a Bush still denser and gloomier than that they had quitted. Geoffrey looked thoughtfully around him,—at the matted growths, the darkening sky.

"I confess I am at fault here," he said lightly enough.

Eve looked neither to the right nor the left, she stood patiently waiting, her face absolutely expressionless.

"What is your idea of our course?" he asked suddenly.

"Between those two palm trees," she replied at once.

"Really? I should have thought exactly the opposite."

"Go on then," she said.

"No, no. We have had enough of my bushmanship."

He turned in the direction she had indicated and began to force a slow passage through the dense growths. The ground rose gradually, and in the end culminated in a ridge whence a glimpse of the surrounding country was obtainable. It was no more than a glimpse, a few acres of tree-tops, a narrow ribbon of darkening sky, with a segment of lurid cloud low down on the horizon. Not a leaf stirred, not a bird sang, an appalling loneliness held the scene. Even as they gazed a star twinkled forth, then another. Night was setting out his lamps in the ocean of space.

Whatever thoughts may have passed through the man's mind in the moments of gazing, they found no expression in his voice.

"Do you wish to go on?"

"It is impossible to go on."

"Then—what?"

"There is nothing to be done but wait for the daylight."

For the first time her voice showed signs of unsteadiness, and he turned quickly towards her; she was still gazing at the remote cloud. "The night will be long and probably cold," he said in matter-of-fact tones. "If you will sit down, I will light a fire and find you some protection."

She obeyed in silence, and he busied himself in collecting firewood, of which an abundance lay scattered around the little opening. Soon from that island in the ocean of vegetation there arose a slender pillar of smoke that brandished itself against the stars and was lost in the growing darkness. Through the heights above went a faint whisper like the sweep of a garment. Remote at first, scarcely perceptible to the ear, it grew rapidly in volume, the leaves turning themselves softly in the air, vibrating expectantly. Swiftly accumulating, the river of

¹ A species of bramble.

melody swept onward until the surrounding forest rocked and danced with a frenzy in the embrace of the first wind of night. A few minutes later a second gust followed, and after a further interval a third, then all was still.

"Will you come to the fire?"

Even in the shelter of the forest the night air struck chill. The girl rose with a shiver and followed him. He had cut some palm leaves and plaited them into a sort of screen, against which he had piled a heap of dry fern-fronds.

"That is the best I can do," he said. "I am afraid you will suffer some inconvenience, but no more than can be avoided. The screen is on the weather-side. I will see that the fire does not go down during the night." She looked at his preparations but made no motion to avail herself of them. "It is unfortunate," he added after a moment, "that my companionship should be forced upon you, Mrs. Fletcher, but I will endeavour to remind you of it as little as possible." Had he been watching her where she stood in the red of the firelight he would have seen her wring her hands with a despairing gesture, but still no word escaped her. "I have brought you an incredible distance in the wrong direction," he went on with the same biting calm; "probably it would be impossible to convince you that I have not done so intentionally—nevertheless, such, is the fact."

Then she raised her eyes and looked at him,—looked at him long and reproachfully. "Hate me if you must," she said in a low voice; "I have earned your hatred, but do not think it needs your cruelty to make me suffer."

He drew back sharply, as a man withdraws who finds himself unexpectedly on the verge of a precipice. When he again approached the fire

her figure was almost indistinguishable among the fern.

"Eve," he called softly. The girl moved and sat up. "I had forgotten I have some food in my pocket. Are you hungry?"

"No, but I am very thirsty."

He unstrapped his water-bottle and, kneeling down, held it up between her and the light. "There is not much," he said; "and if we are many hours in the Bush to-morrow, you may need it more than you do now. Does that seem cruel?"

"Then give me just a mouthful."

He complied and watched her as she eagerly drained the small metal cup. "Now another," he suggested.

Eve declined resolutely, and passed him the little vessel. The hands that held it were icy cold, and he possessed himself of them and held them with some force between his own.

"Why are you like this?" he said. "The night is not so cold. Are you in pain—in fear? Tell me." Slowly, yet forcibly, she extricated her hands one after another from his grasp; but her manner showed no resentment—hardly, indeed, feeling of any kind. "Have you no speech for me?" he asked bitterly. "Is our separation such that even circumstances like these are unable to span it?" Still she was silent. He rose and stood looking down. A log on the fire fell in, suffusing her face with light. "Is it in your mind that some sort of explanation is due between us?" he asked.

"Yes," she said.

"Will it come before we part?"

"If you insist."

"And if we never part?"

She looked up, and in her eyes was the same unreadable expression he had seen in them hours before in the ravine. That was all the answer she gave him; nor was there any further

interchange of speech between them until the morning.

For Geoffrey the night was spent in attending to the fire, his labours broken by brief snatches of rest that never lapsed into complete unconsciousness. He had tasted no food since the early morning, and hunger conspired with cold and anxiety of mind to keep him waking. That they were now aware of the direction in which the settlement lay counted for little; for if they had been unable to strike the road when close to it, what chance had they of doing so when separated by two or three miles of untracked forest? Little, indeed! yet the attempt must be made and persevered in,—must be made, too, possibly without water, and with very inadequate supplies of food. The absence of water constituted, indeed, the greatest threat. During the fight with the fire, "water" had been the chief cry of the workers; and he knew that the forcing of a passage through the Bush was a task little, if any, less arduous. How was it possible the girl could endure such hardships? Yet with the coming of the light these gloomier anticipations vanished, and the thought of the long and intimate companionship with the woman he loved which was destined to be his filled his mind with a great unreasoned happiness.

In the first grey light Eve sat up. A tinge of colour had returned to her cheeks, and a greater serenity seemed to dwell in her eyes.

Geoffrey produced his supplies and began quietly to explain the situation. "Fortunately," he concluded, "Lena has generous ideas as to what constitutes a mid-day snack, so things are not quite so bad as they might be. The liquid department, however, is in other case, and that is where the shoe is likely to pinch before long."

Eve listened in silence. "Very

well," she said, when he had concluded; "if you will divide one of the sandwiches between us, we will eat it before we start. As for the water, we will take it when we must."

"I'm afraid you have not been listening very attentively," he returned quietly. "I endeavoured to explain beyond possibility of mistake that these things were for you, wholly and solely, and that I have no idea, immediate or remote, of sharing in them."

"Then put them away," said the girl, her eyes flashing. "Before I descend to a vileness like that, may I die a thousand deaths!"

"But you cannot surely be serious? Consider our probable disparity in powers of endurance. There can be no fair partnership where one person is called upon to endure more than the other."

She rose to her feet. "Are you ready?" she asked finally.

He looked at her in perplexed reflection. There was a semblance of the old sunny smile he knew so well lurking in the depths of her eyes, and that more than anything convinced him that it was useless to continue the argument.

Before starting again on their journey, Geoffrey examined the scene long and carefully. "If we can reach that big *kauri*," he said presently, indicating a tree a quarter of a mile away, "and then keep to the side of the hill, every step must take us in the direction of the settlement. I can see no better landmark than that."

For upwards of two hours they searched the Bush in vain, and long ere those two hours elapsed their sense of direction was again obscured. Trees of every other description there were in countless numbers, but of *kauris* apparently none.

"We have been keeping too close in," Geoffrey decided at last. "We must try further afield." And they

pushed on with the idea of widening their circle of explorations. The third hour was nearly spent before their search was rewarded.

"I see it!" Eve cried suddenly; "there below you." And in a few moments they were by the huge tawny barrel of the King of the Woods. He stood, as is the manner of his kind, in royal isolation from the remainder of the forest, so magnificent in his suggestions of strength and eternal youth that, for a moment, the pair paused, forgetful of self, in that mute reverence which the mighty works of Nature must for ever arouse in the heart of man.

"It is lower down the hill than I thought," Geoffrey said at last. "However, our course should be simple; we have only to keep to the same level, and the trend of the spur must bring us to the road."

"If only we could find some water!" Eve said, seating herself under the tree.

Already the demands on the bottle had drained it of its contents, and every creek they had so far come to had been dry. Geoffrey looked at her uneasily and then down the slope.

"There should be water in the gorge," he said. "I can try while you sit here and rest yourself."

The girl sprang at once to her feet. "If there is water we will rest beside it,—together."

What evil lurked in the words to cloud his eyes with cold suspicion? "Are you in fear that I will desert you?" he asked.

For a moment her eyes blazed passionately, then she turned away with cold indifference. "Go, then," she said.

But in an instant he was at her side, had snatched her hand and carried it to his lips. "God forgive me! God

forgive me! But try to conceive the miracle your presence here is to me. For months I have lain under the lash of your scorn, I, who would have died to save you an instant's suffering. Eve! Eve! there is not a drop of blood in my body that does not worship you. Life and death have no torments that can blot out the love I feel for you. Look up, my dear one, look up and tell me, however it may have been in the past, that now and for ever you trust me."

The face she raised to his glowed with an indescribable radiance. "Now and for ever," she said, and gave him her other hand.

So for awhile they stood in all but perfect understanding. And over them the *kauri* spread his leafy screen. Rooted in the centuries, he had watched through a thousand generations of man the fleeting shadows on the forest floor; and still they came and went.

The journey to the bottom of the gorge was made together, and, with the subsequent reascent, it proved the most arduous task they had yet encountered. Every foot of the way was a struggle with the dense vegetation that rioted in those dark and humid depths, where even the fiercest sun-ray was powerless to penetrate. Tangles of supple-jack, declivities of bare rock, fallen trees buried in filmy ferns blocked their way at every turn. And when at length they reached the pit of the gorge, where only the shade-loving palm found the heart to grow luxuriantly, they found that the long drought had penetrated even there, and the bed of the creek was dry.

Then, exhausted, they sat down on the rocks, which in the winter time were covered by a foaming torrent, and looked despairingly at one another.

(To be continued.)

A JAPANESE NOVEL.¹

NEVER in the whirligig of time has such a strange thing been seen as the Revival or New Birth of Japan. We watch the unprecedented evolution of a new force with interest and admiration, but it is not too much to say that the wonder is greatly mixed with an undefined sense of uneasiness, similar to that experienced by those who watch the irruption of a hitherto unsuspected volcano. Within so short a space of time that many of us remember it well, that wonderful country tried to shut the door in our faces, and would have nothing to do with foreign devils; and to-day they beat one of the aforesaid devils, and not the least powerful of them, in open warfare by sea and by land. And there is yet a stranger symptom; one of their novelists now writes a preface to one of his novels expressing the hope that Englishmen and Americans may thereby become more acquainted with the ways and thoughts of insular Japan.

Though in no way concerned with politics, there is no doubt that in the sad story of Nami-San, or Nami-Ko-San (for the name is written in different ways), the author, Kenjiro Tokutomi, gives the English and American public something to think about. When we see to our unbounded astonishment how the Japanese can act, it is of the greatest importance that we should know a little how they think, the one being the cause and precursor of the other. We learn again from

this book what we have always more or less known, that outwardly they have much in common with us, but inwardly differ from us in many surprising ways; and we hazard the theory that we might perhaps learn more about our allies from the way they handle the pen than from the way they handle a gun. We must dismiss as of no importance the anomaly that they blow the Russian fleet out of the water on a diet of rice and raw fish, and that the novel was probably written, or rather painted with a brush-full of Indian ink and then typed on a Remington, or taken down in Japanese shorthand which, considering what a fearfully complicated thing their language is, must be one of the most difficult performances of the kind, though Japanese newspaper reporters think nothing of it. These matters are not essentials. When we ask ourselves where this new development is likely to stop, and whether it will bring what so many people profess to dread as the Yellow Peril nearer to us, we should dismiss all thoughts of precedents, for the situation is unprecedented. The case of the Huns, who by sheer force of numbers once overran Eastern Europe and took the Roman Senators by the beard, is not on all fours with the present situation; they were driven on by a sort of instinct inherent in wandering tribes, and we have now to count with an intellectual awakening of a decidedly home-loving race. It is as easy to over-estimate this new power as to under-estimate it. The question is not, how many warships have

¹ NAMI-KO, by Kenjiro Tokutomi; translated by Sakae Shioya and E. T. Edgett. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904.

they, how many men can they put in the field? The question is, are they mentally and intellectually our equals, or even our superiors? Did they know the answer to this perplexing doubt when they shut their door against the Western Barbarians, and practically only opened it wide when they had assimilated and made their own the few sciences, mostly in the engineering way, which they wanted to be more than a match for us? In the innocence of our hearts, or rather let it be said in our conceited ignorance, Europe superciliously gave them what they wanted, and only too late we see that it might have been wiser to imitate them by shutting our own door. Even now, after the unexpected Japanese victories, the public at large are not fully alive to the magnitude and the danger of the Japanese Question.

If we are to judge from all we hear and read, when we listen to those who have studied them at home, we find that they do not themselves admit any inferiority whatever. That they are intensely patriotic is much to their credit but does not prove much either way, patriotism being the only admirable virtue that requires no foundation in fact. Many years ago the Japanese servant who accompanied Miss Bird on her travels by the unbeaten tracks of Japan, candidly informed his mistress that he thought very highly of her but that, not having the advantage of being Japanese, she was in one way his inferior. Miss Bird did not altogether relish that notion, but one who was presumably a better judge, the late Sir Edwin Arnold, always gracefully conceded their superiority over Europeans, and as a proof of his sincerity in the matter married a little Japanese girl. As we know and regret, the pretty little wife

of,—well, of O-Edwin-San, was left a widow, who is a much more important personage in Japan than a wife, and it is of the strange power invested in a widow as head of a household that Mr. Kenjiro Tokutomi treats in the story of Nami.

The technique of the novel is astonishing. To those acquainted with the usual flowery inconsequential nonsense of Eastern literature, a novel like *NAMI-KO* comes like a revelation not inferior to that of Admiral Togo's successful actions at sea. If we except a certain weakness in the dialogue, an almost childish simplicity of a truly Oriental character but out of place as an effort at realism, the story might have been written by one of our own novelists. Of necessity we must also exclude the plot, which we must take as absolutely true to Nature though we cannot understand it. *NAMI-KO* or *HOTOTOGISU* as it is called in Japanese, could not have been written in Europe, because such things never did and never could happen in Europe. It does happen in civilised Japan; in fact the novelist tells us it is founded on fact, as he himself has heard Nami's tragic story told. This may or may not be true; they are so wonderfully imitative that it would be strange if their literary men, who have Tolstoy and Flaubert at their fingers' ends, did not make use of our own well-worn literary tricks.

Be that as it may, exclaim as we will against the monstrous power invested in the hands of a widow, a power described as a national custom too well known to require explanation, here we have an officer in Admiral Togo's victorious navy parting with tears and sorrow from a dearly beloved bride,—and divorced from her the moment his back was turned, without knowing anything

about the matter himself, by sentence of his mother who in Japan seems to have all the powers, and more, of a judge in a High Divorce Court, for no earthly reason except that she disliked her daughter-in-law and that she, the young wife, was consumptive, and she feared infection for her son. On the judgment of that singularly constituted Court, the father of the bride, a general in high command, without a murmur, without waiting to hear what his son-in-law might have to say in a matter which somewhat concerned him, meekly took his disgraced daughter back.

Let no one run away with the idea that this novel, so inauspiciously started, is pure unadulterated nonsense. This, as the main plot of the story, is the only thing we Westerners cannot understand; it seems preposterous, one has to admit, but the rest is true human nature, and would be as true in London as in Tokio. If we wish to understand the Japanese we must take the trouble to place ourselves at their standpoint and allow for the tyranny of immemorial custom, just as a Japanese would have to take very much for granted in our own social customs, to him quite as inexplicable. It is not so very difficult to understand the position of poor Nami-San; God knows we have victims of unwritten laws among ourselves. Nami-San was purely innocent of any evil, but so are some of our victims, and the ethical and moral customs of Japan, even including this one, are such that, woman for woman, there must be considerably less suffering in this respect in Japan than in England. We must try to understand; it is not for us to throw stones.

Well, this shockingly ill-used officer, a gentleman and a hero, wounded in the action off the Yalu River, returns home to find his wife gone, and

according to the social rules of his country lost to him for ever. His behaviour in these trying circumstances is that of a saint, if not precisely of a sailor. We are unregenerate enough to think he ought to have smashed something, his own and the widow's furniture at least, but he did nothing of the sort. He knew how to handle a breach-loader, how to settle a Chinese ironclad, but before his fractious, unreasonable mother this gallant sailor was as weak as a lamb. Takeo and Nami had sworn to die together some day, so distasteful to them was the bare idea of separation; they parted as true and passionate lovers, and when he returns and finds his wife divorced from him by his mother, without his consent having been asked, he hardly forgets his filial duty so far as to scowl at her; he talks to her, stiffly, formally on indifferent subjects, enquiring after everybody's health and how warm it is, both avoiding in a painfully natural way to touch upon this burning topic, if ever a topic burned; they both knew the threatening explosion if this foul, unnatural thing were mentioned between them, a thing worse than murder, for of course poor Nami dies of it. What are we to think of this gallant officer's conduct? Do we understand what goes on in his brain? Not a bit. As a friend, as an enemy, how far would we trust such a sphinx-like individual? There is more behind this question than appears for the moment.

The Western world could probably not show a more efficient or a cleverer staff-officer of a modern line-of-battle-ship than Baron Takeo Kawashima. The tender, well educated, and infinitely ladylike Nami-Ko-San, as we see her on her wedding trip on the balcony of the hotel, dressed in the quietest grey crape silk, the cheeks

a little thin, the eyebrows a little too close together, slender, graceful, would not be out of place in any modern well-bred society. But their thoughts are not as our thoughts. When the fiat of the despotic mother-in-law has gone forth during the young husband's absence fighting for his country, the lovers do not try to meet again; they never met in this world again, and in another world they do not believe.

Yet not a shadow ever came between them. Just before they were for ever parted, we listen to their innocent talk, so very English, with a dainty shade of reticence in it. Just so might we overhear the drawing-room talk of Cissy Smith and Captain George Smith, R.N., home on furlough.

"When I think," says Nami-San, "that you must go on duty again so soon it makes me feel that time passes all too fast."

"But if I stayed always at home you are sure to say on every third day, 'My dear, you had better go out for a walk, hadn't you?'"

"How dare you say that?—More tea?"

This is just the sort of innocent, slightly unmeaning chat of a country where a mother-in-law may be inconvenient at times but never spells doom. It beguiles us into believing that there really is not much difference between the two countries after all. Takeo sips his tea, knocks the ashes from his cigar into the fire-box, and looks contentedly round the room.

"I seem to be enjoying a second honeymoon; doesn't it seem so to you, Nami-San?" Words were now lost between them, and they only smiled and looked at each other in dreamy ecstasy. The delicate fragrance of the plum-blossoms filled the room as the happy couple sat together before the fire.

This may be called an English

picture, not our conception of a Far-Eastern one. Before the blow fell which crushed these two young lives, we may be sure dainty Nami-San was often seen riding her bicycle in the suburban roads round Tokio, for Japanese ladies of the better class ride as much and as well as their sisters in England. And as a background to all this there is the unchanging East, the Eastern warp of thought, the Eastern cruelty and insensibility to pain inflicted, the stoical bearing of that pain.

But though they never again spoke together, they once by accident saw each other for a moment, and this is as beautiful and touching an incident as any English novelist could have imagined. Poor Nami-San, dying of grief and in the last stages of her illness, is taken by her father the General to a sanatorium on the hills. As the train slowly leaves the station another train as slowly runs in, side by side, and the young wife in the first-class carriage of the one recognises a young man in naval uniform in a second-class of the other. For one single instant the ironbound social custom of ages is thrown to the winds. "Oh Nami-San!" cries the broken-hearted Takeo, while Nami-San rushes to the window, regardless of danger, of her father, of her nurse, who vainly try to drag her back, hangs half out of the carriage and with streaming eyes throws her violet handkerchief as a last token to her loving husband as the trains slowly draw apart.

What are we to think of this? Is such a situation conceivable? So much valour, so much culture and refinement mixed with such impossible social laws and customs seem like the bewildering confusion of a dream. That was the last glimpse they had of each other, and one must admire the art of the novelist who makes a

skilful use of the hero's professional duties to keep the days or hours in which they could have met within probable limits. Flesh and blood could not have stood too much, for the breaking of unwritten laws, however strong, is not an unknown thing even in Eastern countries where such laws have a power beyond our imagining. These laws are in full force to-day, for this is not ancient history; it is supposed to happen in 1894-5, and the personages of the realistic story all move in good society, are all more or less Europeanised; the General and Takeo, when off duty, go about in tweed mufti; we get glimpses of telegrams, of billeting in time of war, of queer army contracts,—all as it might be among ourselves; and the author moreover expresses a faint hope that a more public discussion of such customs may have some salutary effect. It is evident, therefore, that at the present day almost incredible contrasts between feudalism and civilisation go hand in hand, and such impossible customs, with of course a hundred others which we could not for a moment reconcile with our Western notions, seem absolutely compatible with the highest outward refinement and the greatest military and naval supremacy.

As a slight concession to more modern ways of thought, General Katoaka, the father of the shamefully ill-used Nami, when after her death he one day meets her divorced husband at her grave, is made to say: "Takeo-San, though Nami is dead, I am still your father." This was very handsome of him, considering he entirely acquiesced in the disgraceful affair and took the Japanese view of it. It is true he adds, as a final tag to the book: "Come, be a man; all our misfortunes have been to prepare us for a greater work." This is not a bad example of Japanese consolation,

for they have a saying, "To kill at Nagasaki one's enemy at Yedo," and Takeo may later on have struck all the harder at the Russian for not having been able to strike any one at home; but it would have suited our Western minds better if the stout General, who stands in this book for the incarnation of Japan's knightly spirit, had, while his poor daughter was still alive, made a knightly attack on the insufferable mother-in-law and had shaken some common-sense into her. But things are not done that way in Japan. There is still a considerable confusion between East and West, for which the altogether bewildering language of the Eastern country must be greatly responsible. Literal translation is of very little use, seeing that we cannot shape our thoughts into sentences mutually intelligible; in other words, and this goes to the root of our difficulties, the Japanese process of thinking is different from ours. If the good General had asked us how he could have set about that difficult business of shaking the mother-in-law, he would, according to the dictionary and the highest authority on the subject, that of Professor Chamberlain, have said: "O Shiete Itadakitai," which literally translated is "Honorable-teaching-wish-to-put-on-the-head," and means in the very nearest approach to sensible English, "I wish you would be so kind as to show me how." Small wonder if little misunderstandings arise sometimes. We can only take our leave of this sorely afflicted family by saying, "O Kino Doku Sama," which literally rendered is rather a puzzling expression, meaning nothing less or more to us than "Honorable-Poison-of-the-Spirit-Mr."; but to the Japanese it means, "I am sorry for your sake."

And now for the practical application of this strange story, for it would

be a mistake to think it held no lesson for us. It is claimed for this novel that it is a realistic work, and as such, whatever its defects may be from our point of view, it lays bare a small corner of the soul of Japan to the best of the native writer's knowledge and powers of observation. If such inexplicable actions go on behind the civilised guns of Oyama and Togo, what other mainsprings, directly or indirectly influencing national and individual action, may not remain to be studied and understood before this nation is admitted without suspicion as one of the great Powers of the world. Is it safe to judge of what such a nation may be likely to do, to reveal or to conceal, if we trust too much to the apparent civilisation which we judge from our point of view and from which we expect results, actions, and decisions identical with our own in similar circumstances? When all is said and done, if the man behind the gun is of more importance than the gun itself, the national drift of thought behind that man is of greater importance still. In our Kaffir wars the greatest disasters have always resulted from our natural and complete ignorance of what a Kaffir would be likely to do in certain given circumstances; and some day we may awaken to the discovery that we have failed to grasp what a Japanese would be likely to do. To put the matter in a nutshell: where would all the Chancelleries of Europe be if for instance they did not know, and know intimately too, the extent and direction of French thought and character, if they were as much in doubt about it as we confessedly are about that of Japan? Who can say how much of the disasters of the present war may not be due to that same hopeless want of insight into the Japanese brain? Does an engineer trust an unfamiliar piece of machinery of

which he does not understand the working?

It may be objected to this rather gloomy view of the Japanese Question that we are confronted by similar difficulties in our dealings with all other Oriental races, and have not done so very badly with them after all. That is true, but Turks, Malays or Bengalese, though they may be difficult to deal with, do not stand on the same plane with the unfathomable Japanese. There is no mystery about an Afghan or a Kurd, but a Japanese is nothing but mystery. Residents for a lifetime in their country give up the riddle in despair. Mr. Petrie Watson, after a residence of three years in their midst, says that Japan is unknowable, incomprehensible, not to be understood. The common experience seems to be that when you have been six weeks in Japan you know everything; when you have been there six months you begin to have your doubts; at the end of six years you know nothing at all. When Takeo Kawashima came home he did not do what we should have expected of him, because he belongs to a mysterious race, mysterious in its origin and history, mysterious in its sudden evolution. Take him as a type, and we are confronted by a great mysterious nation that may any day surprise us by a still more wonderful evolution, by a still more mysterious line of action. It is a feather in England's cap that she should have concluded an alliance with this rising Power before its real greatness was apparent to all the world. It is in its way as fine a piece of political foresight as was the much commented-on purchase of the Suez Canal Shares. We are all agreed that it is a good thing to have a powerful friend; whether it is equally desirable to have a mysterious friend to whose thoughts we have but

the very slenderest of clues is another matter on which opinions may differ. The rapid evolution of Japan is in any case a very disquieting problem; the marvellously successful assumption of Western civilisation, thrown on as easily as one throws on a cloak, is not one of the least disquieting features of the cloud (or is it a star?) that has so ominously risen in the East; ominous because we do not in the least understand it. Its Nami-Sans are so gentle and ladylike, its Takeos so brave, so like ourselves and yet not in the least like us; pleasant, courteous and inscrutable; victorious over China, victorious over Russia, yet always quiet, silently self-possessed, showing to the outside world only that queer Asiatic deprecating smile, "the smile that was childlike and bland." Nobody believes that the balance of power may some day be transferred from the West to the East, and yet, as the writer we have already quoted says very pertinently: "We should once have laughed to be asked to think of a Japanese Sphinx who should call a halt to us with riddles of life and death." We do not laugh to-day. It is a cloud already a little bigger than a man's hand; it may, for what we know, be beneficial or it may presage a cyclone. Certain it is that we cannot afford to neglect any opportunity of getting better acquainted with the true heart

and inwardness of Japan. Information gained through the usual diplomatic sources does not go to the root of the matter. In our fearlessness and proud consciousness of power we Europeans lack that sense, so strong in uncivilised races, of a suspicion of the unknown. A Zulu will steal anything he can lay his hands on, but you may safely leave your small change on your writing-table if you take the precaution also to leave a few bits of paper arranged in the form of a cross or a circle. The Kaffir does not know what that may mean, and because he does not he gives the table and the money a wide berth. But the White Man, proud in his strength, is as a general rule very careless of any writing on the wall. What we see and understand of the heaven-descended Mikado's realm impresses us far more than what we dimly guess to be concealed behind the veil. The Japanese will never swarm and over-run the West, like the Huns of old. So much we know; their numbers are comparatively small and they are home-keeping. There is another instinct, another national or racial impulse at work which we do not understand because this instinct or impulse is now shown for the first time in the world's history, shown by a people who are eager for information and give none at all in return.

THE OLD ENGLISH PEASANTRY.

THERE are certain articles essential to comfortable human existence, and produced in their best form by certain materials that cannot be improved upon. Thus, bread is of all foods the most important, and the peerless raw material of bread is wheat. Beef and mutton are the most nourishing of flesh foods, and are furnished in perfection by grass-fed oxen and sheep. Genuine wine and ale are the most refreshing and wholesome of alcoholic beverages, and can only be produced from the grape and the bearded grain. Science may do her best to devise substitutes for these classic materials and products; Nature laughs her to scorn, and triumphantly indicates the primitive simples.

Since the birth of sanitary speculation certain methods of life have been held conducive to health and happiness. One should live as much as possible in the open air, be temperate in food and drink, and take moderate and agreeable exercise. The rules are indisputable, yet the simplest thinker might evolve them. There are maxims that inculcate the secrets of national prosperity. One is that there must at least be intervals of wise and altruistic government; another, that concessions must be made to liberty. Moderation in expenditure, sterling faith with foreign Powers, freedom of thought and debate, are mottoes old as the hills. Yet national prosperity is not wholly dependent upon sound politics. Its foundation is that element of which, according to the holiest authorities, man was made, and unto which he shall return. The race that would remain invulnerable

must be able to produce its own sustenance as well as to assert, defend, and govern itself. The land that has no strong peasants will soon have few brave soldiers. It is with nations as with individuals, none may slight Nature without incurring disaster.

The importance of prosperous agriculture has been a favourite theme with many direct reasoners. Bacon puts the case admirably in his observations upon the excellence of a true peasantry as fighting-stock. Goldsmith's lines in *THE DESERTED VILLAGE* are known to everyone. Recently we had Ruskin and Morris, and thousands of their disciples remain, some of whom seem to think that tapestry, pageants, and black letter are the true redemptive agents. The Church provides a few earnest declaimers, who would found religious communes in remote nooks of the green shires, and destroy Mammon by avoidance. Some of the superior country-folk have become mildly altruistic, and lure the villagers into travesties of the maypole and morris-dance. The awakening influence has reached the business centres of the great cities. The rich trader whose predecessor was content with a house in the suburbs, the wharfinger whose ancestor dwelt above his place of business, these find life insupportable without a manor in the Surrey hills or the Kentish weald. The small shopkeeper dreams of a villa in rural Essex, and a latter-end sanctified by incessant gardening. The petty clerk must have his annual spell of the open air; a fortnight of cycling on dusty highways, or basking on a shore that

The Old English Peasantry.

is an Inferno of tolls and by-laws. The workman in constant employ has his beanfeast and Sunday outing; the casual regards his month of hop-picking as a recreative picnic.

The fact seems to be that there is nothing genuinely altruistic in these furtive and unsatisfying snatches at the blossoms of Arcady. They are rather symptoms of a disease which, by undermining olden spirit and genius, and weakening the glamour of ancient traditions, is slowly blighting the English race,—the disease of over-centralisation. The town-dweller's jangled nerves crave the ever-receding ruralities; the manhood of the open country, that during forty years has been steadily streaming from its proper channel, still trickles townward, though the source is nearly dry.

There is talk of re-colonisation, and the designers as usual start with incorrect notions, notably as regards the past. The proposition that English agriculture may be revived by settling upon the land all the human rubbish of the cities is unworthy of challenge. The concomitant opinion that creation of a rural class from the dregs of the old peasantry would be undesirable and difficult I traverse with the statement that it is impossible. I do not, in the present essay, propose to enter upon demonstration of the practicable; indeed, I hold it will be quite early enough to indicate systems of colonisation when we have so far amended our laws as to render it possible for land to be bought without being paid for twice. Mine is to be more a pastoral than a sociological essay. If, while reminiscently picturing quaint villages and genuine originals, I succeed in correcting sociologists' ideas upon recent rustic history, I shall be satisfied for the present.

It is generally conceived that English rural life during the early half

of the last century was an unbroken experience of famine, slavery, and brutishness, and that the yokel even of the early sixties was as represented in certain comic prints, a feeble Yahoo with a turnip face, hair like tangled straw, and calfless legs,—one given to sitting upon stiles for the amusement of quizzical tourists, to whose questions he made idiotic answers in a dialect compounded of Somersetshire, Yorkshire, the Midlands, and the Berkshire Downs. I hold an entirely different opinion, and venture to think that mine, being based on observation and worthy legend, may be the correct one. At any rate, it will commend itself to disciples of what may be termed the genial barbarism, people who are somewhat scornful of the full stomach and the blessings of monotonous employment, people who refuse to believe that the highest destiny of the Englishman is gradual conversion into a mere engine, stoked with chemical foods and guided by routine. It is to such gallant eccentrics that I chiefly address myself, lovers of the green foot-way and the murmurous woodland, who are pained, in visiting an English village, to find the inn turned into a meeting-house and the skittle-alley into a futile institute, to behold a neglected artificial fountain and a rusty ladle in the green hollow where of old cakes and ale were scrambled for.

Seventy years ago the laws were terribly severe, and sometimes enforced with great brutality. Food was occasionally scarce and dear, books were hard to get, illiteracy was prevalent. The long, cold winter evenings were often endured with but scant fire and light. Rural labour was badly paid, and the yokel sometimes had to walk eight or ten miles to his work of a morning. Yet he who listens to the unrestricted talk of old peasants will detect something

redeeming in the recapitulation, something melodious as the thristle's deepest note, sweet as the scent of violets. The poor folk of the remote villages knew many lovable sleights; there were glee-parties galore and mummings of Plough-day and May-day; neighbours frequently visited each other and danced the whole night, and the wake or feast was often as sprightly and beautiful as the author of *TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL-DAYS* has described. There were toil-crushed and weather-worn ancients in the villages, but there were strong active men as well, and women roundlimbed as Hebe. I know many old peasants of both sexes whose beauty seems impregnable by years, and gives the lie direct to the caricaturists. The songs were not, as now, mere echoes of city rowdiness and inanity, but rude and telling versifications of local history, quaint settings of rustic love, often exquisite ballads which are now well-nigh forgotten. Records survive of gallant and manly cudgel-play and wrestling. Some who at present adore the little yellow man, and gape at the marvels of Jujitsu, are probably unaware that their own rustic ancestors were good men of their hands and feet, and would have thought little of the foreign athletes who ruffle it so profitably in the emasculated England of to-day. Men who walked eight miles to work, and lived principally on barley-bread and porridge, yet could wrestle and fight as the old-time peasants did, were not moulded like the Yahoos of the comic prints. There must have been sterling mettle in a class that, in spite of hard times and crushing labour, kept so tight a hold upon simple poetry and manhood.

Let us get back to so recent a date as 1864 (the beginning of the end) and view the last of the smock-clad worthies. It is a balmy morning in

early summer, and I am walking with a young cousin to visit an old peasant to whom we are distantly related. We pass many arable fields, in which sunburnt men and women are hoeing and weeding. There is a persistent odour of new-mown hay, and the melody of rubstone and steel rings from the high-hedged meadows. As we near our destination, two farmers ride past, stout as oak, red as madder. We meet a troop of village children straying to school, the girls shy yet yearning for acquaintance, the boys openly hostile. A lad from a village two miles away is a foreigner, utters a strange dialect, and must be baited accordingly. My cousin engages in combat with a stocky youth of his own age. A tall, horsefaced man arrives, carrying a yoke and pails. He sets down his gear, and solemnly superintends the fight, in which, after a tough struggle, Cousin Tom conquers, with the loss of one tooth and much blood from the nose, and the gain of a black eye. "I didn't mind the tooth," says Tom, as we proceed on our journey; "'twere loose afore. But blam this eye! Old Dad'll twig it when I get home, and 'twill be an excuse for another wallopin' me! I had one last night for breakin' a jug, and I never bruk' it at all, neither. Sister Nell owned up to it arterwards; he never lays a finger on her. 'Never mind,' said old Dad, 'a wallop in' or two ain't wasted on one o' my boys.'"

The road runs downhill between high banks, and leads us into the straggling, picturesque village. The bulging cottages are founded several feet above the roadway; rough stone stairs lead to their ivy-crowned doorways, their thatch is spangled with flowering weeds, their gardens are redolent of roses. Some gipsies have camped on the green, and are lounging in the brilliant sunshine, the men

dark, white-toothed, raven-ringleted, the women beady of eye, carneying of tongue, covetous of coppers. Yonder are the squat, ivied church and the sweet parsonage beneath the soaring elms. The three brothers Belton are mowing the parson's close. Such peasants one will look for in vain in 1870, when the pick of the Beltons and Redmans and Oldacres will have drifted into the towns or gone overseas. Two of them are wondrous tall and wide-shouldered, lean as greyhounds, hard as trained pugilists; the third is short, thick-set, huge-calved, bull-throated. All have curly chestnut hair, clear grey eyes, and flashing teeth, and wear corduroy breeches girded tightly, blue worsted stockings, and clean white shirts open at the neck. Chests, arms, and faces are tanned dull red. No three in the shire can out-mow, out-reap, out-pitch, or out-dig the Beltons. The short one can carry six hundredweight; the others, though bred on the clods, can run and leap like stags, as my lord's keepers know to their cost. The Beltons are friendly with my father, and hail me over the hedge with "Hullo, little 'un!" Then they turn to their work, and the scythes sing musically through the grass. We climb the bank and watch them. It is a bonny spectacle, the standing portion of the meadow fluttering and bending in the furtive breeze, the long swaths of cloven grass,—

The young men whistling as their great arms sweep.

On the edge of the green stands the mill, and the miller's man is loading sacks of corn into a waggon. We have seen a deal of work this morning, and thus far every toiler has been whistling. The miller's man cannot whistle as he goes, for he has a straw in his mouth, but he hums a tune

through his nostrils. And, by the spirit of England, it happens that this is a wondrous fellow too, with great slouching limbs, and so round of build that his clothes seem to be falling from him! One may perceive that he is very strong; he carries the big sacks straight athwart his shoulders, toddles easily up the step-ladder, and throws them into the waggon as though he were tossing off his cap. "Hot work, Dick," says the blacksmith's journeyman, crossing the green with a jug of ale, making for the red-eyed forge. "That it be," says Dick, relieving himself of a sack, and gazing thirstily after the jug. "Any chance?" "No, yer mouth's too big," laughs the smith. Dick selects another straw to chew, and proceeds with his labour.

We arrive at old Nat's cottage. It stands on a slope, protected from the north and east winds by a ridge of woodland. The southern gable bulges in ghastly fashion, and is supported by a huge prop, and the undulating roof is verdant with moss and herbage. Nat is a thin old fellow with lank white hair and small straight features. He is in shirt-sleeves, and wears fustian breeches and gaiters. "Come in, boys," says he; "your grand-aunt has made ye a gooseberry pie." We enter, and seat ourselves, well knowing that grand-aunt's gooseberry pies are worth walking twenty miles for, let alone six.

The house is one-storeyed and one-roomed, the walls are of immense thickness, there are only three windows, and they very small. An alcove near the chimney serves as pantry, and a loft under the roof as bedroom. From the threshold we step a foot downward to reach the floor, which is of mud. A rough deal table and a few homely chairs constitute the furniture, and on a beam

hang Nat's reaping-hook, shears, and violin, the last article only in use, for Nat is past heavy labour, and subsists by performing odd sleights of abstruse village-work, and on an annual dole from a bedehouse fund. He is highly respected, being considered "a well-schooled" man, although really most of his knowledge is self-gained. He is a musician of no ordinary class, and possessor of the phantom of a fine tenor voice; and everyone of humble rank within five miles that knows aught of music, singing, sign-painting, and land-measuring has been taught by him. His favourite books lie on a rough shelf near the chimney; the Bible, an ancient Cocker, *THE YOUNG MAN'S BEST COMPANION*, Shakespeare, *PARADISE LOST*, and a volume of ballads, much dog's-eared at *THE NUTBROWNE MAYDE*.

Grand-aunt is a bonny old dame with a set colour, and golden down growing on her plump cheeks and arms. She holds her husband to be the wisest man in the world. Whom he is civil to she regards with favour, and detests all others. Her bitterest resentment is reserved for the schoolmaster, who, in the course of an argument upon land-measuring, once ventured to call Nat "a conceited, hedge-schooled old humbug," and refused to withdraw the aspersion even when the curate proved Nat in the right. The said curate, Nat's firm friend and trusty confidant, she honours with her most gracious and comprehensive curtsies.

While Tom and I are at our meal, the curate arrives, and produces, according to custom, a paper of tobacco. Grand-aunt supplies two long clays, the worthies light up, and at once commence discursive discussion. Our curate might sit for Mr. Abraham Adams. He is tall and sturdy, with big, red-knuckled fists, and a face like

unto that of a very large, clever boy, a face in which sincerity, courage, and sympathetic appreciation are delightfully exhibited. Nat has submitted to the schoolmaster a home-made arithmetical problem, to which the schoolmaster has returned a correct answer, arrived at by an incorrect system of working. Nat explains this with great gusto; the curate, gravely puffing his pipe, examines problem and work, and concurs with Nat.

Grand-aunt opens the door, and the sunlight falls on Tom's face, which is distended with gooseberry pie. "Hallo," says the curate, "hallo, this boy has been fighting!"

Tom bolts the mouthful of pie, and tugs at his forelock. "Twarn't my fault, sir," says Tom, blushing purple; "he *would* fight."

"Who?"

"One o' the Needham boys."

"Ay," says the curate, "they're a turbulent crew. Who won?"

"I did, sir," says Tom, blushing still deeper.

"There's a deal to be said in favour of honest fisticuffs," remarks the curate. "Bad blood will be, and it is better it should stream from the nostrils than fester around the heart. Did you shake hands, boy, after the fight?"

"No, sir."

"Then you should have done so," says the curate severely. "Did you ever fight when you were young, Nathaniel?"

"No, your Reverence, being but a wastrel, and not built for the like. I have always had the knack of argy-into my quarrels. But I'm a rare good judge of a fightin' man. I love to look on a well-built young man; there's no finer sight in the world."

"I agree with you," says the curate, squaring his big shoulders. "Man was originally created in God's own image, and, but for habits and

practices repugnant alike to God and Nature, would never wear a likeness to the goat, the pig, or the monkey. Such habits and practices, I regret to say, prevail among all nations, and have stamped their insignia upon the faces and forms of the greater portion of mankind. Much of this, Nathaniel, is due to the class from which I am descended,—the better class, as it is called—that in pure thoughtlessness has measured out privation and slavery in endless doses to the poor.”

“But your Reverence,” says Nat, “may call yourself one of the poor, being little better paid than a day-labourer, and yet ready to give the shirt off your back to the first in need.”

“Such poverty as I endure,” says the unaccountable clergyman, filling his pipe, “I accept as a divine visitation for the sins of my ancestors; men, Nathaniel, whose lives were steeped in riot and profusion, and who bequeathed me nothing but the bare means of education, the recollection of their own cruel extravagance, and a tendency to gout which I combat with much exercise and barley-water.”

“I was born a weakling,” says Nat, “and have heard my mother say it was through bad times, my father having foolishly borrowed money at a wicked rate of interest, and brought such hardship on his family that ’twas a wonder I ever came into the world at all. But I’m not over angry with him that I haven’t big legs and shoulders, for I think my headpiece gained by the weakness o’ my body, as is often the case wi’ the children o’ the poor.”

“I have observed it,” says the curate. “There is a child in the school at Marpleham who has hip-disease, and will never grow into a man. He owns a most wonderful memory, and is the brightest lad I

know. He has a brow like an angel’s; I have never seen such an expression elsewhere.”

“There should be something done for him,” cries Nat.

“Unless I can succeed in interesting some of the gentry in him,” sighs the curate, “I fear he must be left to weaving baskets and knitting stockings. We take more care of our beasts, Nathaniel, than of our kind. Indeed, we will not even plant flowers and vegetables in unsuitable soil, yet we thrust young people wilfully into ways of life that are poison to them. I would I were a rich man; I would make little Grainger my especial care. May God provide for him!”

“’Tis to be hoped so,” says Nat, “for if your Reverence fails to work him good nothing short of a miracle may do it.”

Tom and I have finished our meal, and slip out of doors, making for the wooded ridge. There is a great elm on the crest of the hill, and we climb to its topmost branches. The village lies far below, crowned with wreaths of blue smoke; beyond is a great mound of woodland, and farther still are the green prairies and arable of the hunting shire. A skylark hangs a hundred feet above us, showering melody upon the country-side, and swaying in the sun-glow like an angel’s feather adrift from blue Heaven. The southern breeze rocks our perch deliciously, and we opine it would be glorious to have a cabin amid the rustling boughs. When we descend, I explain to Tom how, in my opinion, Robinson Crusoe would have fashioned the cabin in question, and somehow this causes a quarrel, Tom being a bit of a blockhead, and having never read the book. We bombard each other, first with epithets, then with stones. Finally I return to Nat’s, hoping that the curate may still be there.

The debaters are in the garden. I crawl amid the currant bushes, and listen attentively.

"Nathaniel," says the curate, "you have never been in a theatre, and—"

"I have seen plays," says Nat; "I once saw *MACBETH* played in a barn at Marpleham. 'Twere nonsense. All that terrible, dauntin' business crammed into a couple o' hours! Nowt natural about it, sir. *Read* the plays,—that's the only way. Remember Shakespeare had little good to say o' play-acting. 'The best in this kind are but shadows,' said he."

"In my youth," says the curate, "I had a great idea of stage life, and—"

"A man needs few sarmons and few books," says Nat, dogmatically, "that reads and understands bonny William. I think he'd ha' given us better sarmons and better thoughts still if he hadn't been an actor. We must admit there's a deal o' poor stuff in his works, put there, no doubt, just to please the play-goers."

"Indeed, I disagree with you," says the curate. "Being the wisest of men, he knew the best way to display his wisdom was to spread it before people in a form that would interest them. As for the poor stuff you speak of, I'd like a specimen."

Nat proceeds to quote at wide range, snatching scraps of turgidity from *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* and *TITUS ANDRONICUS*, and bits of "skimble-skamble stuff" from *THE COMEDY OF ERRORS* and *LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST*. At the end he says: "Surely poorer nonsense couldn't well be put into form by a wise man. If people talked to each other like that in ordinary life the dogs would bark 'em down. This stuff was put together for the play-goers' groats. Now, listen, William himself is speakin'!" He declaims, with immense energy and sonorousness, from *JULIUS*

CÆSAR, his favourite play. "Your Reverence," says he, "this Cassius, though a great self-seeker, is a most wonderful man, wi' the clearest possible style of expressin' his mind. I don't wonder that he envies Cæsar, knowin' himself to be a deeper and more determined man. This play and *KING LEAR* are the greatest things in print."

"How do you know?" says the curate pettishly. "You have read but few books."

"When I see a mountain," says Nat, "so mighty that eyesight cannot reach its crown, mayn't I say, 'This is the highest mountain i' th' world'? It fills my mind, and leaves no room for owt else."

"You are against all the great authorities," says the curate. "Why prefer *KING LEAR* to *HAMLET*? As for *JULIUS CÆSAR*, you're the only man living who would claim first place for it."

"There is the grandest language in it," says Nat. "And I am partial to *KING LEAR*, because 'tis the only play in which Shakespeare says a good word for the poor."

"We shall never agree on these matters," cries the curate, "we shall never agree. You are over-confident of natural and unaided judgment; you should pay more respect to the opinions of the learned. Ay, and though I own you have a marvellous memory, I'm sure you went wrong in the last quotation." Nat smiles superciliously. "I'll fetch the book and prove you wrong," says the curate, growing wrathful. "I have some little skill of memory, and indeed I read the piece but last night." He strides into the house, returns with the volume, and discovers that Nat is right. They drift into fierce argument, walking up and down the garden, and part almost in dudgeon. Grand-aunt tells me, as

she watches the curate stride swiftly down the road, swinging his stick as he goes, that they often argue for hours together, and, no matter how angry they are at parting, the curate always turns up next morning, "as pleased as pie."

Good-bye to the village of 1864. From that date degeneracy is easily traceable. It commenced with the eviction of the cottagers, an admirable class of small holders whom the craze for large farms drove off the face of the land. Huge holdings and agricultural machinery did away with the old skilled rustic labourer, one able to plough, sow, reap, mow, stack, thatch, shear, dig, drain, hedge, ditch, fell, and bear burdens, one knowledgable in horses, cattle, sheep, and swine, a reader of the stars, an understander of herbs, a secure weather-prophet,—in short, a many-sided expert. The sturdier of the young men made for the seaports and became stevedore's labourers, or went navvying, or emigrated. The old sports and pastimes had already been snuffed out by such peculiarly fatuous meddlers as exist nowhere but in England, such as never fall across a clear-cut, picturesque human type but they spend much time and money in rendering it nondescript, their method being to bestow on the object of their solicitude everything that is unwelcome, and shut it off with a thousand barriers from the things desired. The peasants needed each a bit of land, and a good sound tap of home-brewed ale at the inn; the first was fiercely withheld, for the second was substituted a drinking-fountain. A drinking-fountain! Most surely a godsend in rustic England, where as a rule it does not rain oftener than three times a week, and there are rarely more than three streams to every square mile.

Now, the villagers dwell in boxes of brick and slate, the green has been hideously encroached upon, war to the knife is declared against all gipsies, there has not been a fight in the locality for years, and scarcely anyone knows how to dance; it is doubtful whether there be a hind able to carry a sack of corn, and the curate is a lisping effeminate who edits the poorest possible type of parish magazine. Every villager can read and write: *TIT-BITS*, *ANSWERS*, and *THE DAILY MAIL* constitute the favourite literature. Everyone has been by cheap excursion to London and the seaside, and considers that in the whole wide world there is nothing left to learn. Education has had its way, but there are no wise men. If Nat and the curate were to rise from their graves, they would find themselves outlaws of a greyer and cheaper life than of old, intruders upon a crew of zanies who have neither the grace to acknowledge nor the wit to understand an original.

Now I would say something of a certain London suburb with which I am well acquainted. Thirty years ago a huge forest, of late only to be approached through miles of brick and mortar, projected one of its green tentacles to where now stands the principal railway-station of a district populous as ancient London. Only fifteen years ago I rambled through woodland past a quaint rustic tavern that is now a great gin-palace. This vast suburb till within the last two years held few real Londoners; one heard in the streets the dialects of East Anglia, the Wealds, the Midlands, Scotland, Clare, and Kerry. Most of the settlers were young married folk, and thus the streets swarmed with the children of country-bred people,—children rosy, upstanding, good to look at. Here and there

(most significant spectacle) one beheld the old countryman, his quaint large face encircled with hoary whiskers, he intent chiefly on things still near his heart,—the stocks of the butchers' and green-grocers' shops—or the old countrywoman being led by her grand-daughter to church or chapel. Even for such gnarled relics there was no room in Arcady; they must come to the great suburb, and dwell with John or William who had set up shop, with Donald of the engineering works, or with Patrick in the Customs or Post-Office.

But now the more prosperous settlers are going further afield, acquiring at immense expense half-wood freeholds on desolate outlying marshlands, localities on which in Defoe's day the sun rarely looked till noon, so thick the white fog that overshadowed them, the fog that slew everyone not born in the marshes, and made it possible for an Essex farmer of old to have had his twenty wives, all imported from the uplands, all buried within twelve months of marriage. Now to the great suburb come the overflowings of the old East London, the frowsy, verminous aliens, and the gutter-snipes born and bred. Barrels of gherkins may be seen in furtive shop-windows, and the smell of fried fish is ubiquitous of nights. Fifteen years more, and the district will be a mere appanage of slum-land.

As fast as a city grows, it breeds the cankers of Pauperism and Degeneracy. To keep those horrid evils within bounds, the city must drink the blood of the country. There is a time waiting upon London when such transfusion will no longer be possible on any scale of benefit. Rural man-

hood will have dwindled; the rustic will be born weaker even than the town-dweller. From thence physical deterioration will be rapid. In the necessitous classes it will become almost universal, displaying itself not so much in decrease of stature as in scrofulous blood, protrusion of the dental structure, slenderness of the lower limbs, inability to lift weights and carry burdens. In the class removed from want the signs in the male will be increase in the length of neck, narrowing of chest and shoulders, sharpening of features, premature baldness,—in the female, anæmia—in both prevalence of sexual hysteria, bad eyesight, and especially imperfect teeth. Lack of earnestness, lack of grip, inability of self-restraint, will be the beacons of moral decay.

Of nostrums there will be many, principally devices for relieving the towns by improving agriculture. The statement may seem bleak pessimism, but is true that scientific tinkering with farming has never yet led to aught but waste of money, and that legislative attempts at direct adjustment of social inequalities will always end in chaos. The most momentous standing rebuke to those who would give officialdom control over farming is EMERSON'S *AGRICULTURE IN MASSACHUSETTS*. The best thing an English Government could do in the way of clearing the arena would be to drastically reform the laws relating to the inheritance and disposal of land, to convince railway companies that their obligations to agriculture and the public are not exactly bounded by their own preposterous by-laws, and then to leave the process of remedial adjustment to the natural reflux of private enterprise and effort.

GEORGE BARTRAM.

THE LAST CHANTEY OF "THE HEART O' OAK."

SHE killed her man; twice she saved life; and her stern-post and compass are in the main entrance to the town-hall, with an inscription in silver-work above them; but she does not know, for she is dead: yet she lived in the hour of her requiem, to hear the glorious accents of her death-song soar above the tumult of the tempest, as she fell upon much desired sleep.

Often when the men went down to the sea, and the procession of the ships stood wind-bound in the harbour-jaws, the elder seamen, who steer by the withered morning-star when they beat up against the dawn in the rainy harbour-mouth, whistle for a wind, and in the break of the whistling, when the idle sails are whispering of coming life, the song of the sea-boys beats upon the bay.

Times are bad an' wages low,—
Leave 'er, Johnnie, leave 'er:
Times are bad an' wages low,—
It's time for us to go.

But in one boat, *THE HEART O' OAK*, a lean long caravel, lithe as an eel, thin forward as a racer mackerel, the song was never of ill times and the weary dog-watch, or of snow-showers in beleaguered ports; but of sea-harvest, comradeship of the fleet, the pleasant social shore; or, by chance, of loud nights and the blinded greater stars,—and that meant the doing and daring of seamen.

When the fleet was in the red eye of the west, shot with fire, and the solan swooping, with yellow glaring eyes and craning neck, in splendid flight, whatever the sound of the

singing of sad songs out of the other boats, in *THE HEART O' OAK* it was

Yeo, boys, yeo,
For Girvan Bar, away;
There's plenty o' gold, as I am told,
On the Banks o' Ballantrae.

When the sea-fires were lit and leaping gloriously, and the bowsprit was raking the polar star, she, the pride of the fleet, went burying down by the nose in a hissing smother of white, and her bosom heaved and panted like a woman's in emotion. How she would gather herself on her trim haunches, quivering like a thoroughbred, and lie half back, as she knew how, to meet the weight of water, bracing herself, with every timber on the strain, like the muscles of a race-horse on the gallop. Shaking off the green mass with a toss of exaltation to the gulls, flinging it white over her shoulder, and her heart pounding and hammering, she would leap forward with a song of the brattle of the sea. With joy she saw it make way for her, curling and rolling in steady waves from her waist, green in the hollow, dark in the side, boiling white on the top.

"These are my precious stones," she thought, as the wave broke and scattered into sun-wrought jewels of light; and her sailing-song then as the sea-boy lay with his nose on her bowsprit seeing a new world in the waves was,

Rolling down to Rio: night, good-night,
dear heart.

And when the red trumpetings of

thunder moaned on the walled clouds, and the stars had perished, skilled seamen made a reach by the weather ear, venturing up a blind shore on the strength of old tales and sailing songs, and the recollection of wise sayings by dead men, the prophets of the deep who knew her times and seasons. Then the wet sea-boy, who sat by the jib-sheet ready to go about in that hazardous sailing, sang as he dreamed of the longshore lights:

We rubbed 'er down an' scrubbed her
down
Wi' holystone and sand,
To face the great Nor'-Westers
On the banks o' Newfoundland.

But these days were over and gone, and now she was one with the cumberers of the beach, and sailed the seas no more. Yet it was never hers to play such a mean play to the end, to be one altogether with the sordid beach-combers which, ragged, unkempt, lived a life of dodging gales, patched anew, broken and mended again, caulked to the height of desperation; no, gloriously she came to the beach on the night of the Tay Bridge, and for a season saw the fleet prepared against the day of adventure, thinking in sadness how, by reason of her wounds, she too would not go down to the sea where was the fortune that chance, and tide, and the cunning of man might bring. Yet in the end she sailed first and staggered home,—to her death.

She had carried crews of old men passing wise, of young fools fonder of the bottle and women than of her; she had been the abode of joy, and once, alas, of grief. She had drowned a man, and it was her dear thought that yet, or ever she was like the other cumberers of the beach, and a plaything for boys to twist up her

gunwales, she might again be a saviour, as she had been on the night of the Tay Bridge. Then indeed would she of a surety have paid the price of her folly in that she had killed him who loved her well.

But England was to blame, England's Royal Navy; for she was not as the other ships of pine, petty and futile traffickers of the lithe seas, who run like hares to a hole when the tempest is loosed. She was of oak, English oak; and had sailed from Stornoway Bay south cross the Highland seas to Man.

There came the ships of war into her dreamy loch and made her a murderess. When the sound of battle raged round the isle, and the folds of the hills were filled with the reverberation of artillery, the thrill of war was upon her oaken sinews, and she was of the order of Nelson's ships.

As the thin moon broke the sky with light over the splintered peaks of Arran, she gazed unwinkingly on the search-lights which swept upwards as Eden's flaming sword. The silly boats of the fleet went about their business seeking herring, their scurvy souls filled with thoughts of husbandry. She alone regarded the fire-lit night, alone watched the leaping flashes and belts of flame when the great guns, the dogs of war, gave tongue. The baying moved her; these ships were of her sires; she was seabred, reared for waters torn with shell, nurtured for an atmosphere which streamed fire, born for the sea-fight which darkens the sun with shrapnel.

Her heart was on fire; for once she gave no heed to the curses of Big MacCalman. She had never seen the blood-red tides, but felt it was hers to float on them with these great ships which were awakening the night

out of her rest upon the hills. She knew the quick death which leapt out of dark bays as she noted the lean destroyers slouch by; the oak in her bosom swelled at the laughter of the guns; it awoke deep down in her memory a consciousness of two ships locked and mad with slaughter, the battle-lanterns lit, and naked men, black with powder, cutlass in teeth, swinging inboard as the ship rose on the swell. She heard the tide of battle rise and fall; she felt the wash of blood in her scuppers; she saw the black Spanish town brooding on the bay, by reason of the English guns which were knocking at her gates.

Once again in the South the seas were lit by the guns, and the search-lights stabbed the stars. She strained round to catch the music; was it her fault if for a moment her quick eye lost the hill-squall and with a slat of the main-sheet Big McCalman's son went over the side? Then the blinding eye of the search-light went out; the guns fell silent, and McCalman's more awful roar pierced the night. She stood shivering in the wind, and horror and pity shot through her when she heard the whine that sobbed from him: "Oh Green Loch! what hae ye done tae me noo?" She had killed his boy: he was gone, gone for ever; and at his passing the lights of the ships of England went out over a bend of the sea.

Before it had been days and nights of the unwarrantable black clay, tales, jests by her sea-coal fire, and joyous sea-boys singing in the night-watches. Now there was a curse upon her: the men were always silent, and often McCalman jammed her savagely into head-seas; yet he could not smother her remorse, and she yearned for the day to come when she might perchance pay the price of her dark deed.

She became a wonderful ship, the

fastest and finest of the fleet, skirting the deep edge of Eternity on nights of tempest. In the fall of the year, after the passage of the brilliant moons, when there came the onset of the Equinox and the salt withered on the bows of the fleet, and the beaches were bleached, McCalman having lost the land, and failed of the tides, she smelt up home for him by the call of the sea when every other boat was sick with fear in a harbour that was one white smoke. From that night she thought his heart went out to her again.

But she knew it went wholly out to her on the night of the Tay Bridge. That night a big tramp steamer lay in the strait bellowing with fear, and McCalman, picking her up by the lightning flashes, got under her lee. She lay with a list to port; her bow, like a cliff half-buried in a roaring burn. HEART O' OAK sank in the trough to the very bowels of the earth, and rose soaring over against the steamer till the men saw the keen stars over the funnel; and every time she rose a man or two leapt from the torn bridge, where they had been for twenty hours. Three men were drowned that time, but it was none of her fault; they jumped too late. She was glad to be away again, for the seas had pounded her and pitched her on the steamer's quarter till the ribs were broken. And sorrow, sorrow! when running home with a wing of the jib, the stinging lightning, as a coward, leapt upon her bare pole with eyes of fire. She felt a thousand fiery little devils reel down into her bowels; again the eye of heaven opened and closed, and in the time that the vault winked, the devils of flame danced through her, stinging her, searing her, stabbing and wrenching at her vitals, till she could no more endure; the blue flame spitting at her mast-head set her so in agony

that the straight spar, the beauty of the port, cracked and crashed by the board.

"The mast's gone tae hell, boys," roared McCalman; and then to comfort the mariners of the tramp, for storms had made them weary, he added, "HEART O' OAK, 'ill weather it yet"; and she felt how he took her tiller and hugged it away deep in his huge arm-pit as if he were her lover; she heard the rasping of his moustache between his teeth and knew there was need of her strength.

They made a jury-mast of the star-board oars. She was bleeding at the stump; the great seas raved like fiends after her; sick and dazed with pain she reeled and fainted, heeling till she lipped the disastrous water. She came to, hearing McCalman's oath deep in his bull-dog throat, and, as a man kicks his favourite dog, he wrenched at her, though it was not the pain she felt but the agony of his wrath. She was heavy with water, gone by the stern; and the foreigners of the tramp steamer whined and whimpered, calling upon their gods.

With a droop forward, she staggered up again; with a shift of the wind she leapt away, her wet bow swinging across the seas; and her anguish was gone in the heat of the strife.

She lifted headland after headland, opened out round Rhumealdarroch, and "HEART O' OAK, oh glorious HEART O' OAK," sang the wet crew as they worked her in by the high sea-mark, and lifted the longshore lights of home. The men of the fleet listened on the quay-head. "The chantey o' HEART O' OAK," they cried and knew it was well with her.

On the morrow she was taken to the beach, where she was stripped; and the men of the port came up from the Western Gate and viewed her

wounds. The joyous mariners, whom she had plucked from death, were there.

"My butivul boat," said McCalman, laying his paw on her rudder-head with a touch quick and tender as a lover's. The rescued mariners gave her a splendid new spar and called her GOLDEN HEART O' OAK; with joy all the men on the beach drank to her, and not a few drank too much.

She lay among the wrecks, for it was the end of the season; these she told how it was her fond hope again to rescue men, but they mocked her.

Or ever a new season came, she went out to her death, on a day when the seas were troubled by reason of the north-west wind. Ships in the outer bay went foul of each other, and were dragging their anchors; a company of men aboard had death at their elbow.

The pick of the port came for a crew. Big McCalman, and Ned of the Horn, the same who was one-armed, and claimed that he was a navigator: Black Jamie with faded eyes, which had in them a private twinkle that saved his face from the gloom of sea-sadness: the Pilot of the Port, too, with his long jaw and eyes steeled to the sea; so big and ashamed of his bigness that when he walked apart in the sea-shore street, he crouched and slouched, a mild man whose daughter had married a minister.

The beach was black, the quay-head crowded with women and young girls crying in the twilight. No boat but her might do; she quivered to her nail-heads with pride, for every man had come to launch her. With joy she felt the rounded shoulders on her flank, the music of her keel on the gravel, as she slipped to the sea. The glory of that baptism! A white wall rose snarling and burst in a cloud over her stern. The crash

made her gasp: it braced her; and she drew her sinews together for the last great fight.

She trembled when in that driving twilight they stepped the new spar, the gift of foreign sailors; she was as a young girl being dressed to meet the bridegroom, though she knew Death was to sail as a comrade at her forefoot. She raced up to her anchors as they bent the sail on her, straining, leaning over them, sobbing to be off, backing and filling, rearing and pawing like a charger foaming at the mouth.

As Black Jamie made fast the main halyard about the pin below the forward beam, the quiet Englishman who lived in the hotel and owned the splendid yacht, walked down the beach and regarded her.

"The old lion, eh, to be baited at last? The old grey lion of the fleet going out to her death?" Then, after a moment's silence, "Men," he cried, "men, I bear HEART O' OAK company," and he went wading beyond the white-laced shore, and the whole beach, in the silence which fell, heard McCalman cry, as he pulled him aboard, "By God, you're a man!"

A deep piercing note rose with a moan through the wind. "She'll never face it," said Ned of the Horn. He was a man who had sailed in the Great South Seas and had lost an arm on the Horn. She shuddered, for he had knowledge of deep waters and had seen the Flying Dutchman.

Big McCalman's laugh rumbled in his throat. "Face Hell!" he said. "She's strong as the Islay tides."

She knew all the little gale-dodgers of the beach heard; here was matter for laurels. But Ned of the Horn in a rage, with two swings of his single arm cut the anchor ropes.

"Ned 'ill no droon, onywy; his cork airm 'ill warstle him hame,"

laughed Black Jamie; "forbye the breeze wadnae hae the cheek tae put a meenister's freen, ye ken, up or doon"; and Jamie regarded the Pilot, and the private twinkle reigned in his eye.

The mad life of the sea took hold upon her as she roared away in white along the quay; and the young men of the town, who stood there, saw her in a rush of water, and that it was the Englishman who sat at the tiller.

With the deepening of that awful boom in her ears came her wind-borne chantey from the quay:

HEART O' OAK o' braw, braw HEART O'
OAK!
Good-bye to the girls an' the tavern
wines,
The old pipe band an' the shops wi'
their signs,
O, it's blowin' hard sou' eas' for
Derry!

But she heard not; she had taken the way of the sea upon her, and led, as she had done on many a despairing lee-shore. She swung away, a sleuth-hound of the sea, so that Ned of the Horn afterwards swore in the ANCHOR bar that the English yachtsman was the best steersman out of a snow-besieged harbour. She opened round the sea-mark and took it wet and stinging aboard at the break of the forecastle. A thrill shot to her heart, for there, in the grey tempest, were half a dozen boats with anchors fouled, huddled together like a snarling pack of dogs, and slowly driving to death.

She would never have forgot, had she lived to a hundred seasons, the yelp with which they welcomed her; and the next moment she was buried to her bowsprit. The mast was grinding the life out of her; the strain of the sail on her side was agony; she rose sorning with anguish, as a stricken war-horse plunges, screaming; the white sweat of torture poured from her forefoot.

Since the time when Ned of the Horn came by his mischance on a frozen night in Magellan Straits he thought he was afraid of gales. "My God! See't yonder; it's wan white smoke," and he pointed to where the fouled boats loomed and went out in an atmosphere of spindrift. "I'm for turnin'." Big McCalman, who stood by the Englishman at the sheet, cried, with eyes like a sword, "Do or die! Keep 'er sailin'." The Englishman nodded in the gloom.

"The gulls are away," she thought; "that's bad"; and she caught the piercing wail of the wind in the cordage of the doomed boats.

There was a cracking in the hills and the seas curled up like white paper. Again and again she was lost in the smother; again and again she heaved up, choking, and thankful that Black Jamie and the Pilot kept the pump going. This was worse than a ten-hours' beat on a blinding night in the teeth of a head-tide; this awful Englishman did not ease her in her worst pitching.

With a scream, half of pain and half of joy, she went about, reaching like an arrow for the boats. It was a pleasure to feel the sure hand of the Englishman in that dangerous work as he ran her up on the lee-side. She heard the sob of death about her comrades, and felt pity raging in her heart because they were caught in a trap. Their crews leapt aboard, and none too soon, for the seas were breaking upon her, half-filling her.

"A wing of the sail,—cast off!" cried the Englishman. "Now comes the tug of war."

"Now indeed," she thought, for her belly was full of the water she had taken aboard.

The gale struck along the world out of the blue-black sky. With an upward leap THE WILLING LASS tore her anchors out of the bowels of the

earth and went pitching on the booming cliffs. HEART O' OAK, sagging homeward, heard the crash; the dark fell and a great star stood in the sky. On the edge of the sky a ragged band of cloud hung. "That is my flag at half-mast," thought HEART O' OAK.

She rose heavily; but the water in her and the dead weight of men aft were too much, and she wallowed by the stern. Again she floundered up, broken-kneed, and went staggering on her side round the sea-mark. The wind was throttling her. "I must bring them home," was all her thought; but in a lull she dreamed of release and the peace of death. She knew there was nothing but to run ashore; she could not live longer; and beaching meant death.

McCalman stood up, and the sword-sharpness was in his voice and eyes. "Ashore wi' her!" he cried. "By the Lord we'll show them we are men."

"It's a pity," the Englishman muttered; "the old grey lion's got to go." He crammed her crashing on the beach, a blind, reeling HEART O' OAK sick with pain.

A great sea came ripping her side; she took the wound deep, and the seas poured in choking her. With a sob she heeled on her side; death was cold in her throat.

"Jump," cried the Pilot to Blind Mary's son, "jump."

"I'm feart, I'm feart," wailed the boy; but the Englishman lifted him over the side. They all followed, except McCalman and the Englishman; why didn't they hurry? The combers knew they had her at last; they were charging like cavalry; she was slipping, slipping on the sloping beach; she could not lift her head, for she was sea-worn; she lost grip of the beach,—slipping, slipping into the dark. The big rent in her side was letting in the ocean. God! she

was choking, drowning to death; she who had been a bird, gasping, choking. She saw them shake hands, ready to die, for she had lost the shore; she saw the black beach, knew the stricken silence. A man could not live in that sea; the long sob of water was in her own throat. Could they not let her die? Her head fell and she heard a faint cheer as the shore-line sagged across her bow.

Quick, quick! time for one man at least! Ah, could they not see? She leaned over, lifting the empty cran-basket which was bobbing about in her. Yes, good Lord, they have seen it.

With deft fingers McCalman tied the shore-line to it.

"I go last," said the Englishman; and lifting McCalman in the basket, and with the line wrapped round his

right arm he let the next sea take him, crying, as he went under, "Good-bye, good-bye, HEART O' OAK!"

She heard the cheer as they were hauled on the beach. She felt weary, and leaned her battered head upon the sea as upon a pillow. Her work was done; surely now she had paid the price; now her desire was to fall on sleep. She was slipping, slipping; a great darkness, cool and comforting was taking her to itself. If this were death, it were easy.

She heeled over and her forefoot rose in the air; as the waters closed upon her she heard upon the rattling beach her own chantey:

HEART O' OAK, Oh golden HEART O'
OAK!

Good-bye to the girls an' the tavern
wines—

J. M. HAY.

A PURITAN BISHOP.

A PURITAN bishop seems a contradiction in terms; but that Joseph Hall was both a Puritan and a bishop will be readily admitted by those who know anything of his eventful life. His theology, as set forth in his sermons, differed little from that of the unauthorised clergy of his day, while he steadfastly supported government by an episcopacy. During the disturbances and rigours of ecclesiastical polity, which were the offspring of the indiscretion of Archbishop Laud, some noted divines held to the principle of moderation. Among these the most celebrated were Bishop Hall and Thomas Fuller. Themselves imbued with Calvinism, while they clung to the government and ritual of the Established Church, they could sympathise with those who differed from them on less important essentials. Both were Puritans; yet the one was a faithful bishop and the other a no less faithful prebendary. Moreover, Bishop Hall was one of the ablest writers and preachers who have ever graced the ranks of the clergy. He was equally remarkable for bravery and learning, and his moderation was as just as his piety was sincere.

The best account of his life was written by himself in two small pamphlets, *OBSERVATIONS ON SOME SPECIALITIES OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE IN THE LIFE OF JOSEPH HALL, BISHOP OF NORWICH* (1641), and *HARD MEASURE* (1647). "I was born," he says, "July 1st, 1514, at five of clock in the morning, in Bristow Park, within the parish of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, a town of Leicestershire, of honest and

well-allowed parentage." His father was governor of the market-town where his son was born, under Henry Earl of Huntingdon, who was President of the North under good Queen Bess. His mother was Winifred Bambridge, a woman of delicate health and great piety, both of which characteristics, the bane and the antidote, she gave in large measure to her son. Once in the sorest strait of trial, she dreamed that she saw a physician, who promised to heal her. Being much impressed thereby she told her vision to the Reverend Antony Gilby. Of this worthy Fuller says:

He was born in Lincolnshire, and bred in Christ's College in Cambridge, where he attained to great skill in the three learned languages. But which gave him the greatest reputation with Protestants, was that in the reign of Queen Mary he had been an exile at Geneva for his conscience. Returning into England he became a fierce, fiery, and furious opposer of the Church Discipline established in England.

Fierce, fiery, and furious as he was, Gilby with some traces of superstition said the dream was of God. Mrs. Hall, being convinced, as every good woman ought to be, by the reasoning of the clergy, took heart and recovered. Had she been a Papist Mr. Gilby would have ascribed her dream to the Devil; of such different interpretations are the visions of the night susceptible.

Her piety had a deep and abiding influence on her son Joseph, who from his birth was destined for the Church. When he was about fifteen

years of age, one Mr. Pelsett, then public preacher at Leicester, undertook to teach the boy all "he could learn at either university within seven years," and doubtless expected for so extensive a curriculum what Mr. Trapbois would have called a consideration. Hall was naturally filled with bitter disappointment, which was, however, not destined to trouble him long. His elder brother went to Cambridge to visit a Leicestershire man, Nathaniel Gilby, who was Fellow of Emmanuel College, then a new foundation. When he returned, he had been so much impressed by Mr. Gilby's persuasions, that he "fell on his knees to his father, and begged him rather to sell some of the land than to keep Joseph from Cambridge." The father, like a reasonable man, was persuaded, and his son's disappointment was transferred to Mr. Pelsett, who came next morning full to the brim of expectations and returned empty.

Joseph was entered in 1589 at Emmanuel College, where his old schoolfellow Hugh Cholmley shared his chamber and bed; for in the good old days room at the universities was scanty and undergraduates many. Another alarm awaited him in 1591, when the year before his graduation his father, who had "not a very large cistern to feed so many pipes," found his expenses in danger of outrunning his income, and was on the point of recalling the young man; but a mutual friend, Mr. Edmund Sleight of Derby, came to the rescue, and Joseph duly graduated in 1592, when yet another crisis threatened him after he had taken his Master's degree. Two Fellows could not be chosen from his county, and Mr. Gilby being already one, Hall was on the point of being recalled home. The young student's disappointment was keen, but an unexpected turn of for-

tune took place. The Earl of Huntingdon, always interested in Hall, sent for Dr. Chaderton, the Master of Emmanuel, and asked him why his favourite was not chosen Fellow. On learning the true reason the Earl promised to make Mr. Gilby his chaplain, if he would resign his Fellowship. To this he consented and Hall was unanimously elected, by what he calls "a speciality of Divine Providence." While the election was pending, the Earl of Huntingdon died and Gilby fell between two stools. Hall at once went to Dr. Chaderton to beg him to stay the election and reinstate Gilby, who had been his old tutor. The Master replied that it was too late, and "Mr. Gilby must trust to Providence." Whether this worthy would regard Hall's election in the same light as Hall himself did is uncertain; history does not record any speciality in his favour.

A brilliant career now opened before Hall who was Professor of Rhetoric for two years till he resigned his office to Dr. Dod. He then took orders, and was looking about for some opening for his great talents, when a proposal was made to him to be governor, or supervisor, of Tiverton School. Blessings usually come in company, and Sir Robert Drury through his wife's influence offered him the living of Halstead near St. Edmundsbury. From his natural inclination Hall accepted the living, and his old friend Hugh Cholmley went to Tiverton. At Halstead there lived one Lilly, a witty atheist, who used his powers to estrange Sir Robert Drury from his beneficiary. He even took the trouble to go to London to make mischief, where he died of the plague,—another "speciality of Divine Providence" in favour of Hall, but hardly capable of affording equal satisfaction to Lilly.

Somewhere about 1605 Hall, in walking home from church in company with the Reverend Mr. Grandridge, was much struck with a daughter of George Winniffe of Bretenham. Indeed there is always a mutual attraction, which often ripens into an affinity, between the clergy and the gentler sex. Hall's companion strongly advised him to marry the young lady, saying that he had already "treated with her father for her as a wife for him." How long the wooing lasted is not known; but they were married, for in the days of James the First matches were often made without consulting the young lady. Naturally enough these arranged marriages were not always successful; but in the present instance Mrs. Hall was a constant and true helpmeet to her husband, and beyond a doubt assisted in keeping him alive so many years.

The same year he went with Sir Edmond Bacon, grandson of the celebrated Lord of St. Alban's, to Spa in the province of Liège. On this journey he learned that intensity of hatred to Romanism, which found expression later in his tract *NO PEACE WITH ROME*. Wherever he had an opportunity his controversial zeal was irrepressible, to the manifest discomposure of his travelling companion; but when two bantams meet, "the word is bilbow." At Brussels, in particular, he entered into an argument with a Jesuit Father Costerus concerning some reported miracles, and showed a fitting incredulity. Both the disputants grew hot, a common result of theological controversy; but evidently neither of them derived much satisfaction from their discussion, a no less usual ending of all disputation. Argument with Jesuits, where they were supreme, was neither prudent nor safe, and Sir Edmond dragged away Hall much against his will,

Who, as he left his foe, returned
Once more to set a reason right.

Arrived at Spa, Hall found the mineral springs of much use to his health. His companion and himself returned by Brussels and Antwerp ("that paragon of cities," as he called it) and down the Scheld to Flushing. Here he went to find an old acquaintance, and, like Sinbad the Sailor, arrived at the harbour to see the ship in which he should have sailed far out at sea. He had to wait for some time, and when at last he set sail, like lesser folks he suffered severely from sea-sickness. On his arrival in England he was induced, though unprepared, to preach before Prince Henry at Richmond. The death of this amiable prince deprived Hall of a generous patron, and was largely the cause of the later civil troubles. He earnestly desired Hall to spend all his days at court, but the young clergyman had too much commonsense to fritter away his best days at the empty and pedantic court of the Scottish Solomon.

On his return to his living he found himself in a great state of discomfort, as his patron fraudulently kept back from him part of his income. But in 1612 his deliverance came upon him when Lord Denny presented him to the benefice of Waltham Abbey, where he preceded Fuller by one generation. Here he remained for fifteen years actively engaged in literary and parish work. He proceeded to his Degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1612; and soon afterwards became Prebendary of Windsor, where by dint of perseverance and law, two loving comrades, he got the Church lands restored which had been lost by a fraudulent conveyance.

In 1618 James, with that busybody's love of meddling which was his leading characteristic, was much

concerned with the state of the Protestant Churches in the Netherlands. Rent as they were with differences on the absurdest of trifles, they must indeed have been in a sorry plight to desire the intervention of "the wisest fool in Christendom," as Sully, the French Minister, somewhat rudely styled our Defender of the Faith. Hall had two years before accompanied James Hay, then Viscount Doncaster and later Earl of Carlisle, on an embassy to France. During this journey he was attacked by what he expressively calls *diarrhæa biliosa* with a threat of dysentery. The same troublesome ailment afflicted him during the Synod of Dort, and ultimately forced his premature return. To Dort he went with Dr. George Carlton (Bishop of Llandaff), Dr. John Davenant (Fuller's uncle and Regius Professor of Divinity in Cambridge), and Dr. Samuel Ward (Master of Sidney College). The points under discussion were five, Predestination, the Extent of Christ's Death, Man's Free Will and Corruption, the Manner of Conversion, and Perseverance. The ensuing disputations appear to have confirmed the opponents in their respective opinions. Hall followed his golden rule of moderation, which he calls "the silken thread running thro' the pearl chain of all the virtues"; but illness, as has been said, attacked him, and after preaching a learned Latin sermon before the Synod, he was compelled to return home leaving his place to be filled by Dr. Thomas Goad. He received honourable recompense from the Dutch States, and a gold medal portraying the assembled Synod.

King James was so fully satisfied with Hall's conduct at Dort, that in 1624 he offered him the bishopric of Gloucester, which his modesty induced him to refuse. But on December 23rd, 1627, he was consecrated

Bishop of Exeter. Very little is known of his life for the next fourteen years, but no doubt he was busily occupied in literary work. On December 15th, 1641, he was translated to Norwich,—the only kind of translation in which the rendering is usually superior to the original. Here he had little peace, for the civil troubles were fast coming to a head. Though an apostle of moderation, he took a firm stand against the arbitrary measures of the Long Parliament, and joined with the Archbishop of York and eleven of his episcopal brethren in protesting against the validity of all laws made during the enforced absence of the bishops from the House of Peers. For this too kindly interest in constitutional orthodoxy, though nearly seventy years old, he saw the inside of the prison of the Tower of London. Here he remained till June, 1642, when he was released on finding bail for £5,000.

Bishop Hall's *HARD MEASURE*, composed nearly five years after some of the events narrated, gives a graphic picture of the beginnings of the Civil War. He speaks with scarcely sufficient respect of the early proceedings of the Long Parliament. The general cry inside and outside the House of Commons was "No Bishops, No Bishops!" The twelve before-mentioned with Hall, who had uttered their protest, were accused of high treason. "On January thirtieth" he says, "1642, in all the extremity of frost at eight o'clock in the dark evening are we voted to the Tower." With a rigour as severe as the wintry weather they were hurried off to prison, Hall alone, on account of his age, enjoying the attendance of the Black Rod. After lying some weeks in the Tower the prisoners petitioned the House of Peers to bring them to trial. By the careless-

ness or malice of the Commons the legal proceedings were delayed and the bishops sent back to prison. In June, 1642, without having the benefit of justice they were released by the "back stairs" of the law, and Hall preached openly to large and sympathetic congregations till April, 1643.

After this date he was put on the list of the sequestered clergy, and some few crumbs of what was legally his own were doled out to him. The Commissioners appointed for the purpose, who well understood in their own case that every pocket is improved by a golden lining, allowed him £400 a year. The Sequestrators including Messrs. Southerton, Tooly, Rawly, and Greenwood, of whom the last three were well named, came to Norwich and entered into possession of the Bishop's revenues. Whether they made an accurate return and an exact disbursement to the Parliament is not stated; they might have done so and they might not, but they at least behaved with great harshness to the old man. Indeed they would have robbed him of his goods and books, had not a neighbour Mr. Goodwin bought the goods, while the Reverend Mr. Cooke was security for the books. The latter, as Hall says with a touch of bitterness, he paid out of his pittance; and a pittance he might well call it for, after enjoying the first quarterly instalment of his allotted allowance, the allowance itself was stopped.

During these commotions amid the ordinarily peaceful life of the Bishop, his house was visited and searched. His own account is so vivid that it is quoted in his own words, as an illustration of the fact that the clergy had reason to complain against the tyranny of the Puritan Government.

But before this the first noise that I

heard of my trouble was, that one morning, before my servants were up, there came to my gates one Wright, a London trooper, attended with others, requiring entrance, threatening if they were not admitted to break open the gates, whom I found at my first sight struggling with one of my servants for a pistol, which he had in his hand. I demanded his business at that unreasonable time; he told me he came to search for arms and ammunition, of which I must be disarmed. I told him I had only two muskets, and no other military provision. He not resting upon my word searched round about the house, looked into the chests and trunks, examined the vessels in the cellar. Finding no other warlike furniture, he asked me what horses I had, for his commission was to take them also. I told him how poorly I was stored, and that my age would not allow me to travel on foot. In conclusion he took one horse for the present, and such account of another, that he did highly expostulate with me afterwards, that I had otherwise disposed of him.

The scene is lifelike. The reader is insensibly reminded of Scott's description of the Laird of Langcale before Tillietudlem who on his parley "uplifted, with a stentorian voice, a verse of the twenty-fourth Psalm.

Ye Gates lift up your heads! Ye doors,
Doors that do last for aye,
Be lifted up."

Trooper Wright was not so ceremonious. He stood threatening without, while the servants half-dressed and in their night-caps parleyed from within. When he gained admittance, with profound disrespect to the aged Bishop he conducted his search. When he examined the vessels of the cellar, he doubtless both tested and tasted their fluid contents. We can well imagine that Hall did not appreciate the incivility of such early visitors. Many good men were subjected to similar persecution, because they too, as well as their persecutors, were faithful to their conscience.

Though the Sequestrators left Hall nothing and had sold all his goods, they had the cruelty to require of him certain monthly assessments, and demanded the quota of arms which had been furnished by his predecessors.

They turned the old man unceremoniously out of his palace, and he might have been left to die in the street, but for the kindness of a neighbour living close by, who put his house at the Bishop's disposal. Hall had the added pain of witnessing the destructive fanaticism which robbed his beautiful cathedral of many of its choicest treasures. The story of an eye-witness is always valuable, and is given in full.

There was not care and moderation used in reforming the Cathedral Church bordering upon my Palace. It is no other than tragical to relate the carriage of that furious sacrilege, whereof our eyes and ears were the sad witnesses, under the authority and presence of Lindsey, Tofts the Sheriff, and Greenwood. Lord! what work was there, what clattering of glasses, what beating down of walls, what tearing up of monuments, what pulling down of seats, what wresting out of irons and brass from the windows and graves! What defacing of arms, what demolishing of curious stonework, that had not any representation in the world, but only the cost of the founder, and skill of the mason. What tooting and piping upon the destroyed organ-pipes, and what a hideous triumph on the market-day before all the country, when in a kind of sacrilegious and profane procession, all the organ-pipes, vestments, both copes and surplices, together with the leaden cross, which had been newly sawn down from over the Green-Yard pulpit, and the Service-book and singing-books that could be had, were carried to the fire in the public market-place; a lewd wretch walking before the train, in his cope trailing in the dirt, with a Service-book in his hand imitating in an impious scorn of the tune, and usurping the words of the Litany used formerly in the Church. Near the public cross, all these monuments of idolatry must be sacrificed to the fire, not without ostentation of a zealous joy in discharging

ordinance to the cost of some who professed how much they had longed to see that day. Neither was it any news upon this Guild-day to have the Cathedral now open on all sides to be filled with musketeers, waiting for the major's return, drinking and tobaccoing as freely as if it had been turned ale-house.

This pathetic story sheds a lurid light upon the methods of the Puritans, and is an illustrative comment on Dugdale's assertion that the earlier Reformers were the chief instruments of destruction in the cathedrals of our land. That they were so in the abbey is certain, but their later descendants followed in the footsteps of their ancestors. The soldiers who did such havoc at Norwich were doubtless convinced that they were doing a good work, for ignorance often canonises sacrilege into reasonable reformation. Let no one wonder after such doings as these that the Puritan rule was succeeded by an ecclesiastical tyranny which gave birth to Nonconformity. It is not probable that Cromwell sympathised with such destructions, which were, however, generally perpetrated by the Independents; but fanatical force is not easy to check, and headlong zeal is the foster-mother of impiety.

Joseph Hall lived a few years longer attended by his faithful wife. On September 8th, 1656, the old man passed peacefully away before he had seen the Restoration with its wantonness and rioting. For more than four-score years he had walked the world with much learning and more modesty, with calm loyalty and calmer moderation, with sturdy courage and infinite tenderness, with a lion's soul in the body of a stripling. Fuller, who knew and loved and had suffered with him, thus sums up his attainments and character.

He may be said to have died with his pen in his hand, whose writing and living

expired together. He was commonly called our *ENGLISH SENECA* (by Sir Henry Wotton) for the pureness, plainness and fulness of his style. Not unhappy in controversies, more happy at comments, very good in his *Characters*, better in his sermons, best of all in his meditations.

Such is the portrait of Joseph Hall by a friend, who shared his confidence and whose skill in character-painting none can question.

It remains now to justify by illustration and comment Fuller's opinion of Bishop Hall. Like most men of letters he began with verse; but his satires, good as they are, have been more than once reprinted and need not be quoted here. A vast proportion of his work is comprised in his *CONTEMPLATIONS*, which are a kind of amplified paraphrase of the whole Bible. Useful and instructive as these are, it is not upon them that Hall rests his claim to literary immortality. Much impressed by Theophrastus he has left us an admirable collection of *CHARACTERISMS* made with profound insight and keen humour. Translating the Greek surroundings of his model into manners and dispositions thoroughly English, he has bequeathed to posterity an interesting and suggestive work, a favour which posterity does not appear to sufficiently appreciate. Of the wise man he says, "Both his eyes are never at once from home, but one keeps house while the other roves abroad for intelligence." One cannot help being reminded by this of the Sausage-Seller of Aristophanes, who, when the Slave Demosthenes bade him "Turn his right eye to Caria and his left to Carthage and contemplate both together," very naturally asked, "Will it do me good, d'y'e think, to learn to squint?" But squint or no squint, Hall's description of the wise man is in its essence true.

Of the honest man he remarked

very finely, "If there were no heaven, he would be virtuous." A true friend is truthfully delineated:

In favours done his memory is frail, in benefits received eternal: he scorneth either to regard recompense, or not to offer it. He is the comfort of miseries, the guide of difficulties, the joy of life, the treasure of death; and no other than a good angel clothed with flesh.

No better description of friendship than this could be given by any Damon of any Pythias. Again, how true it is of the happy man that—

Censures and applauses are passengers to him not guests; his care is their thoro-fare, not their harbour; he hath learned to fetch both his counsel and his sentence from his own breast.

But if Hall could accurately describe the characters of the good, he could and did use all his powers of keen humour and nervous English to depict the bad. Much of his life was spent among that band of seeming saints who attached themselves to the genuine reformers with Oliver Cromwell, whose sincerity is unquestionable, at their head. Hence his description of the hypocrite is both scathing and exact.

He shows well and says well, and himself is the worst thing he hath. In brief, he is the stranger's saint, the neighbour's disease, the blot of goodness; a rotten stick in a dark night, a poppy in a corn-field, an ill-tempered candle with a great snuff, that in going out smells ill; and an angel abroad, a devil at home; and worse when an angel than when a devil.

The force of the language is great, and the metaphors are exact, and so varied that their strict applicability is wonderful; nor would it be difficult to find illustrations of them in the financial history of our own time. When Hall lived society was plagued

with busy-bodies, as it is to-day; and the grave Bishop has small mercy in his denunciation of the mischievous prattle of those disturbers of public and private peace. Of the type he says, "His tongue like the tail of Samson's foxes, carries fire-brands, and is enough to set the whole field of the world on a flame." The wheel of society is very combustible, and the busy-bodies of life are the sparks which set it on fire.

Hall's hatred of superstition, which he calls "godless religion, devout impiety," was intense. His journeys to the Continent had given him an insight into the superstitions of Romanism, and his minute observation showed him the follies of men and women wise enough save in trifles. His picture of the superstitious man presents many features of much interest to lovers of folk-lore.

This man dares not stir forth till his breast be crossed, and his face sprinkled; if but an hare cross him by the way, he returns, or if his journey began unawares on the dismal day; or if he stumble at the threshold. If he sees a snake un-killed, he fears a mischief; if the salt fall towards him, he looks pale and red, and is not quiet till one of the waiters have poured wine on his lap; and when he sneezeth, thinks them not his friends that uncover not. In the morning he listens whether the crow crieth even or odd; and by that token presages of the weather. If he hear but a raven croak from the next roof, he makes his will, or if a bittour [bittern] fly over his head by night; but if his troubled fancy shall second his thoughts with the dream of a fair garden, or green rushes, or the salutation of a dead friend, he takes leave of this world, and says he cannot live.

In this powerful characterisation there is a curious blending of Romanist safeguards with the survival of heathen superstition, reviewed with a kind of contemptuous pity. Strong, clear, and unfaltering the Bishop saw the vanity of omens and dreams, and

denounced it with much force and refreshing scorn. He does not say how he regarded his mother's dream-physician, but probably only filial piety restrained him from exposing the phantom as a quack.

That Hall had met many disciples of sloth is certain from his remark, that the slothful man "is nothing but a colder earth moulded with standing water." That is presumably the constitutional reason for his warming himself in bed so far into the morning. Among the spiritually proud the Bishop had found many vain-glorious professors of humility, for whom he had no liking. His own innate modesty robbed him of all sympathy with their showy self-conceit, and his humour exhausts itself in the description of the vain-glorious man, of which two brief examples are given. "All his humour rises up into the froth of ostentation; which if it once settle falls down into a narrow room"; and again, "He is a Spanish soldier on an Italian theatre, a bladder full of wind, a skin full of words, a fool's wonder, a wise man's fool." Not even Juvenal in all his remorseless fury could give a happier summary than the last. It is not merely happy; it is literally true. Such are scanty specimens of one of Hall's best known works, and yet how little known is it in comparison with its merits. His two books of *CHARACTERISMS* give evidence of a highly analytical capacity, which would have made their author an eminently able writer of fiction. His plainness of style, his singleness of thought, his pointed wit and subtle humour form a compound agreeable and impressive, and his own force of character is marvellous.

But Hall's most profound work is his *CENTURIES OF MEDITATIONS AND VOWS*. Herein his pithy style and deep piety display themselves to great

advantage. Wisdom and moderation guide his pen, which is none the less pointed for such good company. Humour blends with wit, and both are consecrated to holiest service. And yet his works are so little remembered that the old folio volumes are valued at two pence a pound. Is it not a Samaritan's part to pay the price that some of their wisdom so long neglected may receive fitting care? A few gems are selected from the varied treasury of his thought, and all are set in the pure gold of his pointed style. His resolution of how to use his friend is brief, wise, and witty. "I will use my friend as Moses did his rod; while it was a rod he held it familiarly in his hand; when it became a serpent he ran away from it." Most people prefer to lay the rod on their friend's back to baring their own. Speaking of war he utters a prudent pronouncement to the friends of "peace at any price" with whom he has often and unjustly been classed: "A just war is a thousand times more happy than an ill-conditioned peace." With an eye to the irregular preachers of his day, he has a wise word to certain effusive personages who have been forced into public notice by babbling of what they little understand.

The basest things are ever most plentiful. History and experience tell us, that some kind of mouse breedeth one hundred and twenty young ones in the nest, whereas the lion or elephant beareth but one at once. I have ever found the least wit yielded most words. It is both the surest and wisest way to speak little and think more.

If all orators, political and social, would follow this golden rule, the country would be spared much irritation and themselves much folly.

Himself an active man, in spite of his feeble health, Hall had small

sympathy with idleness. His condemnation is strong, but not too strong.

An idle man is the devil's cushion, on which he taketh his free ease, who as he is incapable of any good, so he is fitly disposed for all evil motions. The standing water soon stinketh; whereas the current ever keeps clear and cleanly, conveying down all noisome matter that might infect it by the force of his stream.

The Bishop was not sparing in censure. In his restless activity he resembled a worthy Sunday School Superintendent of later date who got up sufficiently early to pull out of bed all his lazy male teachers. But Hall was not merely notable for dry humour and caustic wit. Sickly as he was, and in spite of his Calvinistic theology, he was in the main a cheerful soul. Though the end of his life was passed in shadow he could still say, "There would be no shadow if there were no light." He has left us an admirable receipt for happiness: "He is wealthy enough, that wanteth not. He is great enough, that is his own master. He is happy enough, that lives to die well." That he possessed all these qualifications in a high degree his life plainly shows.

Being unmoved by suspicion and prone to think the best of his neighbours Hall could truly say, "I had rather wrong myself by credulity than others by unjust censures and suspicions"; an instructive comment on the utilitarian maxim, "Once bitten, twice shy." Generous in affluence, he was liberal in poverty. Even in his last straits of affliction he found opportunity out of his almost empty purse to give a weekly dole to several poor widows. As he says with much beauty: "The poor man's hand is the treasury of Christ. All my superfluity shall be there hoarded up, where I know it shall

be safely kept, and surely returned me." He has gone to find his treasure, where he will not be disappointed. Always pious he quaintly says :

God's children have three suits of apparel, (whereof two are worn daily on earth ; the third laid up for them in the ward-robe of heaven). They are either in black, mourning, in red, persecuted, or in white, glorious.

Here is an echo of sad experience and mournful Calvinism. We have lived to be almost freed from the red robe, and the black and the white appear to be blended in daily life. Lastly the spirit of contentment always possessed Hall's soul in patience. He could truly say :

I see there is no man so happy as to have all things, and no man so miserable as not to have some. Why should I look for a better condition than all others ? If I have somewhat, and that of the best things, I will in thankfulness enjoy them, and want the rest with contentment.

This was the wise resolution of a wise man, and was faithfully preserved throughout a by no means uniformly peaceful life.

The works from which quotation has been made are not one-hundredth part of Hall's writings. They have been selected to illustrate his literary style and to throw a light upon his character. Every author paints his portrait in his works ; but we are not indebted to these alone for a representation of our author. A fine engraving on copper exists with several paintings. The Bishop has a singularly beautiful face, with

strong features and a long white beard ; but there is a pervading expression of gentleness softening the strength, and the expression does not belie the character of the man. He looks as he was, the very pattern of the true Christian gentleman. His sermons were as powerful as the rest of his writings, and were eagerly heard so long as he was permitted to preach. They are a treasury of witty apophthegms and profound spiritual insight, of unwavering faith darkened by Calvinism, and of strong controversial ability. Not so witty as Thomas Fuller, he could soar on a higher wing ; not so varied in style, he was perhaps possessed of greater terseness. All his works are marked by a delightful pungency and a deep insight into things human and divine.

We can see him writing his *MEDITATIONS* with a pleasant smile lighting up his delicate face as some profound thought or happy expression occurred to him. We can hear him pleading the cause of Protestantism in Romanist countries. We can see his patience ruffled in the midst of argument in a Jesuit land, where it might have cost his life. We can imagine his profound learning so richly yet modestly displayed at the Synod of Dort. And especially during his last years we can picture the "old man eloquent" and brave. A giant soul in a sickly body he lived more than four-score years of unwearying diligence. He passed away full of honour ; though to-day he is little known and less read. Posterity is ungrateful to its noble ancestry ; still the reader of to-day can at least give a kind thought to the pure soul of Joseph Hall.

HOW THE VILLAGE PAID THE DEBT.

I.

IN a place where the payment of ready money had been as a creed taught in catechism days, such a thing as a debt lay like a bogey on the shoulders of the Village, weighing down the spirits of its inhabitants, when it stalked in their midst, or waited at the doorways down the street. It was a word the Highly Respectable would have parsed as an abstract noun, because they could neither see, feel, nor touch it. A public debt too, which only the Village as one man could wipe out, for it was the sum of £25 owing for a new harmonium, which had come to replace one, not unknown possibly in the days when Jubal handled harp and organ.

In the ugliest house in the Village, but because it stood high and overlooked its neighbours, lived a wealthy but eccentric spinster, to whom church, parson, and curate were as hobbies to be ridden, in many cases rough-shod and whip in hand, but usually to their ultimate welfare. She ruled the people also, but to them it seemed but interest they paid for doled charities, which they would have missed as the loss of grey blankets.

"We want a new harmonium badly," had ventured the Parson, who was Perpetual Curate in the clerical scale, and diffident, also poor accordingly.

"Why?" demanded brusquely the Grey Spinster.

"The old one is worn out, and has been for some time."

"Get a new one then, and don't come bothering me."

"But new harmoniums cost—"

"Hearts alive, man, I don't suppose you get them for nothing! But if I say, get a new one, it means I'll pay the cost, only don't set every silly sheep in the Village bleating that its my doing."

The Perpetual Curate essayed thanks, but they were as completely brushed away as if a housemaid had swept them up with the crumbs, so he took up his faded wideawake and set off to write to Messrs. Jubal of London Town, with ready pen and a joyful heart.

On the evening of the day of the new harmonium's arrival, the soul of the Grey Spinster was required of her. Her heir, a distant relative, was a hard man and avaricious; even the paying of legacies to long-serviced men and maids was, as said one, "like drawing a check tooth." It will be thus understood that to him the keeping of a merely verbal promise was of no account; he hardly took the trouble to laugh his surprise that the Village should think it would be. "My cousin was a most estimable woman," he allowed to the Parson, "but possessed of obsolete ideas." With that he dismissed the subject; it is possible he might at one time have had his share of the milk of human kindness, but he kept it so long unused that it had turned to curds at last.

There remained the debt to pay. The Parson paced his lawn daily, and, alternately with composing Sunday sermons, laid the matter before a

couple of little stone boys who guarded the entrance to a top-heavy, earwig-peopled arbour. From the days of his predecessors they had held stone baskets on their heads, from which dribbled, in their season, long-limbed nasturtiums, Aaron's Beard, Creeping Jenny, and the like. It was early winter, and the stone baskets, bare of plants, caught only drifted leaves and the pale loose petals of out-of-season flowers as they fell. The little stone boys looked cold, though the rank grass reached up kindly to their ankles; their features had suffered from the summers and winters they had faced together, and this possibly gave the smile of stolid inattention with which they waited on the Parson's remarks. "The half of my goods I would give," quoth he, "to rid us of this debt, but, as it is, my income is out of proportion to the calls upon it, and mundane considerations obtrude on the spiritual needs of my flock. It is not meet that we should serve tables as Peter justly declares, but I have no alternative."

For though the debt was practically unknown in the Village, its first cousin care traded at the gates with a lean purse.

Farmers smoked many pipes in company at each other's homestalls, and after comparing last year's crops and this year's prices, fell to debating the debt, which diminished not as did their tobacco in the process. Not that it touched them acutely, but rather bore the same relation to their interest in the fatting and selling of their stock, as does our perfunctory commiseration for our brother the heathen; we are sorry for him comparatively, but for ourselves we are sorry superlatively, which is different.

The baker took longer going his rounds and the milkman sold extra quarter-pints of skim milk at such houses as were rented chiefly by ladies good at giving advice but careless in

the matter of dates. Lesser lights met at THE DEWDROP INN, which name may be a mere coincidence or a punning invitation on the part of the landlord. The Village Feminine wore the matter threadbare in front parlours and back sitting-rooms, sewing suggestions into shirtsleeves and wristbands, and darning deliberations into their children's socks and stockings.

Considered by position the first lady in the Village, since the Squire's sister married and went north, and his aunt died and went home, considering also the recent departure of the Grey Spinster,—the Parson's wife suggested timidly, for the Village atmosphere was such as forbade the airing of unsupported opinions,—“Would a sale of work in the Curatage drawing-room be any good, do you think?”

When one took a birdseye view of the labour entailed in the dismantling of what was virtually a china-shop and knickknack-museum, for the purpose of converting it into a mart for the buying and selling of goods, one realised what a spirit of self-sacrifice adorned this meek woman. But the collection of fancy articles which accumulated for the yearly sale of work, being for the most part fearfully and wonderfully made, had the drawback of seldom getting sold. There were bead mats, wool mats, and straw mats; crochet antimacassars, some of which had gone yet one step further on the road to ugliness by being dipped in coloured dyes, even as faded and many seasoned beauties are gowned variously to deceive their appraisers; book-markers, kettleholders, wax flowers with wire stems, with their woolly sisters likewise wired, were all there, indeed some had reached so advanced an age as to be looked upon as Village heirlooms. Children's garments multiplied, but mothers eyed them derisively as being

for the most part fashioned by spinster fingers which had scant idea of the stretching capacity of young limbs.

Therefore, to be just, it was with something besides a spirit of self-sacrifice,—for it was in a spare cupboard at the Curatage these treasures overflowed,—that the Perpetual Curate's wife made her suggestion. But the Village decided that a sale for aught but to aid the financial side of converting the heathen, might so infringe on that cause's revenue, as to be, in a manner, robbing Peter to pay Paul.

"But let us have a sewing-party at any rate," said a little thin woman, with so few interests in life that, apart from sewing-parties and similar excitements, she made her cat's want of appetite of paramount importance in her household, and the death of her canary a real and deplorable calamity. "While we are making things for next autumn's sale," she went on, "we might think of a way to pay the debt. I tried hard to think last night when I was sitting up with dear Trixy, who has influenza." Trixy was her dog.

"Let us meet soon and think quickly," urged another, who found the study of mankind to womankind of more absorbing interest than the welfare of tame beasts. "I declare the gentlemen can talk of nothing else; it's quite time they had something to distract their attention from it."

"Perhaps the debt distracts because we've lost the power to attract," lazily suggested the most beautiful woman present.

So they met to sew at the house of the People's Churchwarden, who being a man of ambition and aspirations, (save where the letter H was concerned), furnished his big wide-windowed rooms in what he was pleased to call Louise Cart'orse style.

"Up at the big furniture shop in London," he would explain, "they gave me the choice, with estimates, of Louise Quinsy or Louise Cart'orse. I tossed, and it came down Cart'orse. French they tell me, and to judge by the unsubstantialness of the chair-legs, I should say it was."

His wife was a breezy hospitable body, who welcomed her intimate friends with kisses which suggested the salute of twenty-one guns, and talked, as well as wrote, with a profusion of inverted commas. In earlier days she had displayed a habit rather of flopping than of sitting; of this the slender-legged furniture acquired by her husband, had somewhat cured her, but a sofa always attracted her as a magnet draws a needle. Her house was in high favour with sewing members, who were outwardly impressed by its furniture, while inwardly their minds were intent on paying it the sincerest form of flattery in their own homes; teacakes offered themselves in endless variety, and one could watch the slow consumption of crumbs, as with analytic tongue and judicial eye their brains weighed out ingredients the while.

The afternoon in question being one of discussion as well as sewing, it followed that lords attended ladies, Jacks came with Jills, and Darby accompanied Joan. A sprinkling of spinsters followed in the wake of their more fortunate sisters, lonely and hungry looking, as those who have missed their chance of picking up gold and silver on Tom Tiddler's Ground, and have perforce to hug to narrow chests the cold comfort of being useful instead. The Perpetual Curate and his brother the Assistant Curate were there, as also a Shepherd from an adjoining fold, the Churchwardens, and a stray bachelor whom the rustle of feminine skirts drew, as mushrooms are drawn by the moon.

Tongues flew faster than needles, for there was that demoralised feeling about the assembly such as pervades a school when its master is absent. They missed the Grey Spinster more than they would have thought possible,—the lynx eye and caustic tongue of their patroness, her spare, bony face looking out under a grey patch of hair, above which towered a bonnet whose original shape the oldest inhabitants could not with certainty describe; they only knew that the years added to it, chiefly by way of fruit, to which on occasion a loop or a bow reluctantly gave place. They called it the Orchard for so many fruits were present after their kind, till at length, not so much from weight of years as of bonnet, Death released its wearer. They missed her, most unaccountably, who seldom sewing herself, kept other needles busy, while she read aloud; generally the Lives of Missionaries, and whether they died violent deaths, sudden or peaceful, her relentless voice galloped them to their end. Tea only stayed the work of fever or cannibals till the following week, or if a short chapter closed their career, more precipitately than ever was the seal set to their doom, amid a fanfare of teaspoons jingling against teacups. None found courage to step into her shoes, nor indeed was asked to do so, and after a sort of funeral oration over the body of Cæsar, they passed on to the debt which Cæsar had unwittingly left them.

There floated on the waters of conjecture the suggestion of a concert, as a means of raising money, and so numerous were voluntary helpers, it was at one time feared performers would outnumber audience, and the Perpetual Curate's brother, who undertook to weed tares from wheat, had an unthankful task.

There was present a Dressmaker, a

lady by birth on a beggar's income, who had long since given up taking fashion by the forelock, but instead, with asthmatic tendencies, panted in the rear of his coat-tails, finding in time not a Deserted Village, but herself deserted by the Village, and life a threadbare garment on less than forty pounds a year. But with a starved frame she held a high head, and told the same unbelievable story at each working party, that she was up to her eyes in sewing, but felt her needle must sometimes work in the cause of charity.

It was at dusk, when it was too dark to sew and too early to light up, that the weak tired eyes had a trick of running water behind their spectacles.

Have we not all a vanity which some of us wear on our watch-chains, and some keep warm but hid beneath the cloak of humility?

The little Dressmaker thought she could sing, and, with a heart beating against her skimpy alpaca bodice, told the company assembled that in her young days the gentry round had complimented her on her voice. "Even now with practice, it was equal to little songs, — little light songs."

"Certainly, certainly," agreed the Perpetual Curate genially; "we should be delighted I'm sure, and so will the ladies,—er—"

An ominous silence gave the Perpetual Curate a sort of feeling that he had stepped in where angels feared to tread, so he turned to his wife, as was his custom, agreeing with all his parishioners had to say, and then trotting comfortably away while she did the necessary disagreeing. A pucker which made her eyebrows meet, was the only sign she ever gave of not liking the job, as now. "Thank you so much, so kind of you," she murmured; "we must think about

it"; then she too paused, and ended by thrusting her baby, metaphorically speaking, into the breach, told how he had cut a tooth since last working party, his manner of cutting it, and his forwardness even among the forward babies of the village, but—

"I always say that nearing sixty, nobody's got a voice worth speaking of, let alone singing on a platform," crushed the wife of a farmer who rented most acres in the Parish.

The Dressmaker drooped reproved and her eyes unaccountably watered, for in spite of being unassuming in manner and negatively dowered by Nature, the soul of the little needle-plyer had always longed to do something in public, and public to her only meant the sight of her name in print on the programme of a village concert. What if she were nearing the debateable ground of sixty, environed by her spare, preserved old-maidism? She had held with a tenacious grasp to lingering remnants of her youth; little vanities of twenty, which had been forgivable at thirty, had no reason for existence at fifty it seemed, and must be gathered up and put away out of sight with the lavender of memory, or if perchance ever taken out to look at, how contemptible they must appear in the strong light of middle age and common-sense. They should do so to herself, only she had been weak as a young thing, and it is hard when one is old and weak and nobody cares.

There was a glimmer of mistake here, for the Miller's Daughter, red of cheek and broad of shoulder as also of tongue, cared and was sorry for the "old body." She said pertly: "There's some of us hasn't got a voice this side of sixty and never will have. I'm turble sorry for 'em." She could say this, having such a great wholesome volume of sound welling up within her, that village churchgoers could

chronicle, and ill spare, her Sundays when she went visiting her "young man's people t'other side o' th' turn-pike." That she would sing at the concert, was a matter of course, for wilfully uncultured though her voice was, not a note rang false; only joy shone in her eyes as, without effort, she poured out her talent prodigally.

The Curate's brother sang likewise, and yet not *like*, nor altogether *wise*, for by comparison his voice was as the wind whispering through grasses by the marsh stream, so thin one could almost see it twine about the Adam's apple in his throat, trailing reedily from his stretched lips. He had once started intoning prayers at Morning Service, but the Perpetual Curate, who had been as a father to him from his youth up, continued the relationship.

The latter, after persuasion, agreed to read something from Dickens, and later promised irritably to his wife, that he would put a little spirit into it; "not as if you were reading an Ash Wednesday Service dear; Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller are so different from that," urged she, who wished him to shine, and strove ever to raise the bushel from his light. She herself offered to play a duet with a neighbouring parson's wife, one they had hammered out together as school-girls, a promise of better things to follow and therefore an excellent opener.

After the manner in which birds of a feather are said to seek their kind, in the Louise Cart'orse furnished drawing-room middle-aged bonnets gravitated towards the fireplace, for it was November and chilly, by reason of the dripping of rain and dropping of leaves; while the hats of their daughters clustered like a swarm of bees to the precincts of a bow-window. Little work was promised and less given, but they made a bid for origin-

ality, swerving from the conventional road-tracks of village custom. "If besides playing duets and singing and reading," said they, "two or three of us could act a small,—that is to say, quite a little play."

"Impossible," declared the wife of him who farmed most acres in the Parish, snapping her lips over teeth which did not admit of their being left long unguarded. "Impossible! It can't be done."

No greater incentive could the Village daughters have for persisting, and, mindful of past slights, the little Dressmaker lifted up her shabby, worn-out voice. "I'd make any dresses you required, at merely nominal prices, my dears," said she, "if I don't get any mourning orders between then and now."

"You wouldn't try anything very ambitious?" urged a lady whose daughters esteemed even Shakespeare lightly, and mangled his literary remains at birthday celebrations and Christmas festivities.

"Oh, quite a little simple play," she was soothingly assured by half a dozen, each with a conviction that she alone would prove a suitable heroine. Later it will be gathered that weeding again became necessary.

"Up at Roadsend Farm they could help," said a hitherto silent listener. "They give entertainments out in the east to the farm-labourers. Even little Mick recites."

II.

On a night of that week between Christmas and New Year, which is as an anteroom wherein we fold gently our memories of the Christ Child, even as we touch softly and without haste the left-off garments of dead little ones, looking up to nod a good-bye to the Old Year who is putting his house in order ere he turns his

face to the wall,—the Village gave its concert. For nine days the snow had fallen and all the fields were under a white wonder, and where the brown earth had been intersected by lines and wrinkles which men call roads and lanes, it was clothed in a seamless garment as of samite. On the tenth day snow ceased falling, and it was the day of the concert.

The Village collectively owned a big-bodied, lumbering chariot called a fly, with moth-eaten linings and musty smelling. Or rather they owned it theoretically, for when it came to hiring it out, and, as now, all the Village ordered it, the proprietor would start full early, make hay while the sun shone, and turn a deaf ear to those who got there too soon and to those who arrived too late. But having mercy on the springs of his carriage and the sinews of his beast, he objected to driving through snowdrifts and, fearing no rival but the Village omnibus, sent the butcher round on horseback with the curt notice that "his 'oss wouldn't be took out that hevenin fur nobody." Some wondered if a persuasive note would grease the wheels, but the butcher reported his friend as "pig-headed and not to be turned."

A characteristic of country folk is their objection to being outdone by circumstances,—which is pigheadedness also; so somehow and anyhow there were few who did not venture out that night. The Roadsenders stumbled in single file down a path dug out and piled high on either side, as stood the waters at the passing of the Israelites, to where a farm-waggon waited them, and with mighty creaks and rumblings the snow-clogged wheels turned slowly in the direction of the Village school-room.

Straw to the knees kept them warm, and a lantern threw patches of light on the snow. Gregory was footman

in the play which had refused to be suppressed; Letitia, with a voice wrapped carefully in shawls, was to sing, and little Micky, by way of practice, repeated the fate of Casabianca a great many times against his mother's shoulder.

Stray lanterns flitted past them up the Village street, and lights from upper windows threw shadows on the blinds. Gregory whooped shrilly when they passed the house where dwelt two maiden ladies, whose niece was Letitia's friend, and, in answer to Letitia's indignant prod, said: "Guessed she was at work with the curling tongs; made her jump, burnt her front hair off."

"I'll pay you out," said Letitia, who remembered no remotest period of her life when there had not been civil war (and not always civil) between her and Gregory.

Treading carefully in pattens down a brick path and under a yew arch, came Miss Job o' Mending, whose Christian name will need verifying what time there is recorded in the *Annals of the Poor* the day her last job o' mending was rolled up, for at all times she had some on hand.

"Do you never make?" one asked her. To which she answered: "Now and again, but not often. There's more than enough making goes on in the world, what with making trouble, making shift, making believe, and making a fuss, making mistakes or making new clothes, so I keep to mending." She was drawing on carefully now, for they had been mended so often, a pair of thread gloves, and it was said she took such sorts of sewing to the Curatage working parties. As the waggon jolted past her, she called cheerily: "Fine night for the concert my dears, I can only catch sight o' you young gents in the lantern light. How's Ma, and how's Pa?"

"Ma's here and Pa's got a cold,"

called out Dan, her favourite by reason of the practical jokes he had played on her, "Which," she argued, "shows the boy must ha' been thinking of me or he wouldn't ha' done 'em." "Have a ride in our carriage, Miss Job o' Mending?" he shouted; "there's room in the straw beside me."

Through the keen air they heard her answer: "No, no my dear and thanky kindly, but there's only a step twix' my house and school-house."

The omnibus lumbered up coincidentally with the waggon, and its horses were unharnessed under a walnut tree close to the school-door, for this chariot, not unlike a hearse in build, was later to do duty as a green-room for the hero, villain, and a footman in the play.

The school was filling fast in spite of the weather, and squeezed into a cupboardlike anteroom the lady performers left hats and cloaks.

A rickety table supported a small looking-glass, a comb, and a candlestick wherein a tallow dip guttered feebly. There was much pushing and scuffling, and remarks such as: "I do believe, Ma, my hair's coming down" (sympathy and hairpins from the mother). "And look, my fringe is all out of curl!" (elderly fingers imitate corkscrews and fight for possession of the looking-glass). "Fasten this hook for me and tell me if I shall do," imploringly from a third (fumbling in the twilight of one candle and efforts to get nearer to it). New arrivals heralded their coming by the knocking of snow-clogged boots against the door-sill, and told of difficulties surmounted on the way. How Jack, recently engaged to Jill, insisted on driving her in his dogcart which overturned and landed them in a ditch. Jill declared she liked it, for they were a couple so entirely and aggressively engaged, that a brother

had been heard to complain, "There was no chance of finding them disengaged till they got married."

At the further end of the school-room was the platform, carpeted with crimson cloth since the Squire's daughter married and they had spread it to the church for her white satin shoes to tread on. On it were the Perpetual Curate, his brother and both Churchwardens, trying to hang lamps where there were nails and where there were not.

"For all the world like hanging up saucepan lids in the dark," said an old woman in the sixpenny seats, whose fingers itched to set them right, having but scant respect for men's handiwork indoors. She had been heard to say, with no notion of irreverence: "The Lord knowed what He wur about when He set Adam to field work, for no doubt his fingers was too clumsy for house jobs."

Laughter and wit came alike from the sixpenny seats; those in the shilling and eightpenny rows sat with a judicial air and faintly clapped; those at the back of the room made up for it by stamping, shouting, and lustily taking up the choruses.

Steadily the room filled till some had to sit on the edge of the platform facing the audience, and the School-master beamed with the air of having given a party and called his neighbours in, for the walls, which mapped forth in square miles and seaboard the extent and glory of British Possessions, did but cover, as it were, those of his sitting-room. He scattered programmes and smiles, turning at times a menacing eyelash on the children, who applauded at his wink, holding "Muster Skoo'marster" greatly in awe. Later he thundered forth THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE with Balaklava-like effect, at the end not bothering to descend from the plat-

form, but waiting calmly till he should get his *encore* from an obedient dependency. Yet was this man an anomaly in the village, for there sat at home, scorning such frivolities as concerts, a diminutive dusty-haired woman, with a small peaked face and thin nose, who ruled the big man with a rod of iron. And not only was he hen-pecked past belief, but a family of small dusty-haired, peak-faced daughters held him chicken-pecked as well. Only a boy who happened midway between eight girls, red-faced as his father and soft of heart under a gruff voice, said once, deprecatingly: "S'pose you don't think, dad, you and me could hook it one day when they've got an extra big row on?" But they never did, and later Village records tell how the son married a woman as like his mother as two peas in a pod.

A trifle late, and sidling up the room under cover of a duet, with an effaced yet proud air, came Letitia's friend, the Companion. The concert was an event in her grey life; she had even bought a new frock for it, which was also grey, but only comparatively, and a joy to its wearer, who had such a love for pretty clothes and was an artist in the selection of them. She was chiefly acquainted with the society of the place through her Aunts' parlour window, beheld from the safe distance of a muslin short blind. Indeed she saw much of life over the top of a muslin short blind, and the seasons variously emblazoned or caricatured by the ladies of the Village. She had once written a short article on Spring Fashions which found acceptance in a local paper, and was never sure if she were more glad or sorry that not a soul in the place guessed it was meant to be sarcastic. She sang small sad songs in a tear-flecked voice, which went to the heart of the Miller's Daughter, who loving all things great

or small, wanted often to catch up the little thing against her broad chest; but the Companion's manner, fringed and tasselled with an aloof pride, forbade all such advances, if indeed conscious of them.

She seldom spoke of how she looked after the Aunts, while the years made lines in her young face, thinking drearily of the probable life that lay before her. It was well enough for the rich unmarried woman; she had her home and folks came about her, and made much of her, and if at times she could see, beneath the attention and the fawning, eyes whose lids would not always shut over calculating plans, hands which, however controlled, would sometimes move with a certain grasping fingering of things not theirs, and if voices unconsciously dropped stage platitudes,—well, the rich spinster could shut her own eyes and stuff cotton-wool in her own ears,—that was her look-out. But the poor one; the lean hungry woman whose bony hands were red-knuckled through much work and scanty gloving; whose tired feet must always run on other folks' errands; whose interests must be made of others' interests because her shrivelled income will not allow her the luxury of having interests of her own; whose tired tuneless voice must read aloud the monotonous days through or recount the petty tittle-tattle of her surroundings! The Companion might have spared herself these sad musings, as we all might when the fit is on us. Years after, a lonely man who came suddenly and unaccustomedly into a portion of this world's goods, looked bewilderedly round, for he had only learned the earning and never the spending of money. He found the Companion, and, remembering past years, they together sowed with it the seeds of many fair flowers among the grey weeds of others' lives.

The Perpetual Curate, obedient to previous instructions, gave a solemn reading cheerfully.

Somebody from a neighbouring village played *LIEDER OHNE WORTE* in the way that rests tired people, feeling through the melodies and clinging round our memories.

Next the heart of the Mother from Roadsend, rose in her mouth and pride glistened in her eyes as they hoisted little Micky on to the platform, a tiny forlorn figure, his face aureoled with its sunshiny hair, turned piteously to "Muv-ducky," for so his baby lips always called her, wishing above everything he were tucked against her shawls, instead of so horribly alone with a sea of faces round him. But she who loved him best braced and held him with her shining eyes, as he told the story of *Casabianca*. To the end the baby voice sweetly told it, then kindly arms reached out and gave to the mother her own again.

The turn of the actors came at length. Bashful and red and tittering they marched the length of the room, for green-room and stage were as the poles asunder. The hero and villain were mild country specimens of their kind; the heroine, nervous and flurried, clutched her satin gown which was too long in front, with moist fingers, looked imploringly at the prompter and enviously at her maid, who being the *Miller's Daughter* and not acting at all, succeeded the best.

The audience was good-natured, criticising maybe, but more lavish of praise than blame; their feelings were not lacerated when the villain with a wobbly sword slew the hero in a not necessarily vulnerable spot, whereat the heroine swooned, and the footman, with the ladysmaid's assistance, carried out the remains. Exit the Drama.

A Toy Symphony followed, for in the country we give you much for your money, and surely since Daniel's time

there was never so great a gathering of musical instruments. And the Village school-children, red-cheeked and white-pinafores, climbed on to the platform (I have called it stage when occasion required) to sing in shrill voices, *THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE*. It seemed as if each child's mother and each child's father sat listening, and they clapped while the little eager faces shone.

We rose as one man to sing *GOD SAVE THE QUEEN*, for it was near the close of the years when the Great Queen reigned in our midst and chiefly in our hearts.

Memory gets disjointed later. There was a jolting ride home with slow stumblings and many slippings in the deep snow, much chatter and gay laughter, the white ground underneath and the white stars overhead. A vision of Farmer Roadsend, long clay pipe in hand, standing in the fireshine of his doorway, with a steam as of hot elderberry wine mulling behind him, came to the Roadsenders, and lights from other homes showed eyelet-holes of welcome to returning inmates.

III.

After the Village folks had gone, and a caretaker wandered about extinguishing lights, and the performers, cloaked and bonneted, had departed from the anteroom, comparative silence reigned, for feminine clamour had given place to men's voices, subdued and counting money. The Churchwardens and the Schoolmaster sat at the rickety table, and the Perpetual Curate looked on.

A confused mutter of three men figuring aloud could not total much more than £5, which is a long way from £25, though a step towards it; and they scratched their scantily

covered heads for ideas as to raising more.

Then one looked up and, standing in the doorway, a listless spectator, saw the Squire, who, since a multiplication of bereavements and money losses, had shut himself up in the Great House as though he were the last man left, yet, to the surprise of the few who noticed him, had been present at the concert. He came late, at the heels of the Companion, and sat down at the back of the room, next the blacksmith and his big family; to the blacksmith's wife he was all unconsciously a wonderful help in keeping the little ones quiet, for the mites fixed their solemn eyes on him and sucked sugar-sticks.

Rumours of the debt had reached him through that discreet filter and sole retainer, his butler, and so far as the Squire,—of whom long descent and rigid seclusion from his kind had robbed a certain vitality—could feel, he felt indignant at the conduct of the Grey Spinster's heir. Years ago he had been angry with the Grey Spinster herself, for her high-handed mode of dispensing charities to the folks who lived in his cottages; and though time had accustomed him to that, and moreover relieved him of much moral responsibility, he was not going to be beholden to her successor. The day before the concert, therefore, he ploughed his way round the snow-buried park, stumbled over broken-down fences which the snow hid, and came home to survey his wine-cellar, which resembled Mother Hubbard's cupboard what time her dog fell sick, for if bad years affected the farmers, they no less affected him.

It resulted in his writing a cheque, leaving the exact amount for the Perpetual Curate to fill in, and this he dangled handkerchief-fashion as he stood in the doorway. So long had he shunned his fellows that memory

hardly prompted him with what it was customary to say when they should meet. But these were simple, country-bred men, with whom deeds ever found favour rather than words; they pushed back their chairs and rose respectfully, as became them, in the presence of the man who was poor as they because he silently winked at arrears in rent-payments.

The Perpetual Curate met the offer of his hand as if it had been an everyday occurrence.

"Have you had a successful evening?" he asked them, stiffly as one turns a key to which disuse has rusted the lock.

"On the whole, yes," they answered.

"There's £5. 17. 8 in hand, and £19. 2. 4 still to look up, sir," said the Schoolmaster, carefully sorting the little lumps of money into silver and copper heaps.

The Squire pushed a limp, pink slip of paper towards the Perpetual

Curate. "Fill it up," said he; "I think you'll find it right. A fine evening, gentlemen, but more snow to come. Good-night."

The thin, stooping figure slipped out into the darkness again, as silently as it had come among them.

Next Sunday, after service, the lame man who earned his bread and cheese by playing the harmonium, struck up the National Anthem, and the people stood up, pleased in their pews, for the simple folks understood well enough that the lame man wanted to express their thanks, and it was not meet to lead them in *FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW*, in church and on the new harmonium. But at the next rent-dinner the farmers gave him that, and Kentish Fire besides, when, instead of sending his agent as heretofore, he sat down among them, silent and embarrassed as usual, but himself again.

THE ENGLISHWOMAN OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE eighteenth century has often been unduly disparaged, and it has also enjoyed a prestige which it does not deserve. It has been condemned for lacking qualities to which it could not, for its very virtues, pretend; and it has been invested by the novelist with a romance which it would not have envied, for the sake of the cocked hat, the lace ruffles, and the Chippendale furniture, which were its accidental appendages. Perhaps the most remarkable characteristic, to a thoughtful observer, of those social and intellectual tendencies which we somewhat indiscriminately label *Eighteenth Century* is the contrast between the assiduous pursuit of culture and the coarseness and grossness into which even the most cultivated habitually slipped back. A super-sensitive nature like Pope's, fastidious by instinct, by habits, and by deliberate choice, was still capable of the obscenities of *THE DUNCIAD*. Was not the principal reason for this that the men had left woman behind when they set out on the pursuit of culture, that they carried it on in the coffee-house, and not in the *salon*? Swift says, speaking of an earlier period, "The methods then used for raising and cultivating conversations were altogether different from ours." The eighteenth century was a period of reaction from the apotheosis of woman which made her influence so charming and so remarkable an element in the thought and life, the literature and the art of the Renaissance.

The groups that gathered round Vittoria Colonna, the Duchess of

Urbino, or Marguerite of France, were only more brilliant and subtle exponents of the arts which were the guiding spirit of the Provençal Courts of Love, the arts which made conversation the principal charm of life in refining wit by sentiment and exhilarating sentiment by wit. Nothing of this kind was known in the eighteenth century. If some bold woman had ventured to set up a *salon*, where she would rally round herself all the wit that was not too coarse, all the learning that was not too pedantic, all the beauty that was not too animal, and would detain men by the attraction of discourses that were always and yet never the same, that were as subtle as they were not deep, as airy as they were earnest; if she had dared to seduce men by these means from the coarser and heavier wit, the more full-bodied intellectual diversions of the literary coffee-houses, she would have been laughed to scorn by the great ringing laugh of Fielding, her features would have been grossly distorted and caricatured by Smollet, her character would have been wounded by some poisoned arrow from the malice of Pope. Pope hated Lady Mary Wortley Montague, not so much because she boxed his ears and laughed at him when he made love to her, as because she was inclined to set up pretensions as a Queen of culture, and the crooked little Sultan could not bear a rival near the throne, even if that rival were a woman. I think the nearest approach we find to those women of the Renaissance is Addison's picture of the widow

who awed Sir Roger de Coverley by her learning, and conquered him by her charm, and by the subtle play of flattery and hope alternating with coldness contrived to keep him her humble slave for over a quarter of a century. Was not Addison drawing the portrait of his own widow,—the Countess of Warwick? She did not crack his brain by refusing to say whether she would have him or no; she spoiled his happiness by accepting him.

If women were not in power at this epoch, they were at any rate much in evidence. A proof of it is the large place that is claimed in the *TATLER* and *SPECTATOR* by women's fashions; perhaps a still clearer proof is the development of the novel in the hands of Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson. The novel is always a gauge, an evidence and an instrument of feminism. If the story-teller had always had mere men for his audience, there would have been no romance; nothing but the improving fable or the indelicate anecdote. The parable of Jotham to the men of Shechem presents a strong contrast to the human interest of the parables of the New Testament; it is because these last had women, too, for their listeners. The influence of the women of the Renaissance produced not only the *HEPTAMERON* of Marguerite but all its Italian congeners. The women of the eighteenth century are responsible for the existence of Fielding's and Richardson's novel; they are also responsible for its limitations.

It will give us a clearer insight into the whole moral and intellectual character of the period, if we enquire a little into the psychology of these women, in their various relations; these Sophia Westerns, Amelias, Clarissas, Emilias, that we know so much better than Lady Luxborough, Mrs. Chapone, Mrs. Delany, or even Lady Suffolk and Mrs. Thrale.

Every honest woman,—said some wiseacre of a moralist, and raised a responsive echo in every eighteenth century heart—must look forward to marriage as the chief end of her life. What was this aim, this ideal, that was to give meaning, if not joy, to life? Fielding has drawn for us a picture of an affectionate father. It is Squire Western, who loves his daughter better than anything else in the world except his horse, his dog, and his bottle. His sister tells him that Sophia is in love. "How! in love!" he cries in a passion. "In love without acquainting me! I'll turn her out of doors stark naked, without a farthing!" Again and again Fielding reminds us that Western was the most affectionate of fathers; but he spares Sophia no violence either of language or treatment.

Squire Western has nothing terrible about him; he is only the typical English squire, one of a class who may be said to have been the backbone of the nation. But every time that he mentions his dead wife, he raises in us an involuntary shudder. Richardson had been brought up in a different atmosphere; he was much nearer to the feminine standpoint. In *CLARISSA HARLOWE* Colonel Morden, who sides with the heroine against her family, yet writes to her urging a match which she detested; the more odious the partner, he argued, "the greater merit in complying with your parents' wishes that you should take him." It was necessary for the novelists that there should be some obstacle in the way of the hero's marrying the heroine, and that obstacle would naturally be the objections of the heroine's guardians. In this way the novelists appear, through the exigencies of their art, on the side of free choice; but in actual practice I imagine Fielding and

Richardson and Smollett would have insisted as strongly on the parents' or guardians' right to impose the man of their selection, as did Squire Western, or Matthew Bramble, or Mr. Harlowe. In their novels, even, they effect a solution of the difficulty by some unexpected circumstances which mollify the parents. Mr. Allworthy decides to make Tom Jones his heir, and Squire Western becomes as eager for the match as he had been bitter against it. Matthew Bramble is decided to approve his niece's choice by the discovery that Wilson is the son of his old friend, a gentleman of property. The only exceptions are where, as in *RODERICK RANDOM*, the guardian who asserts his authority has no moral claim,—under the will of Narcissa's father, her brother, Orson Topehall, has no right to dictate to his sister; or where the parent's consent, once given, is unjustly revoked. That is the case of Mrs. Harris in *AMELIA*. There is no instance, in these novelists, of a couple taking stand on individual liberty and being happily married in the teeth of their guardians' opposition.

CLARISSA HARLOWE alone challenges the justice of the prescription which puts the child's happiness in the parents' hands. That famous book, with all its admirable qualities, is especially remarkable for this, that it is the first declaration of woman's independence in the eighteenth century. It is the first case of a woman's deliberate arrogation to herself of the privileges of personality. Clarissa Harlowe refuses, whatever the cost, to let her destiny be over-ruled by others. She will not marry a man whom she despises, because her people approve of his settlements; she will not even marry the man whom she loves, if she feels herself under compulsion by circumstances that make

it expedient. Still less will she marry the man when he has cruelly injured her. She is a martyr for the privilege of unfettered choice, of inalienable personality. But these other heroines, these who do not rebel, these who plead against parental authority, not as a matter of right but of compassion,—what is the chance of happiness which they pray so pitifully to be allowed to snatch? A few flattering words, a shallow promise of amendment, and Sophia gives herself to Jones when he has lost all claim to her respect.

It should be noted that to the man of the eighteenth century the interesting age is an age of immaturity. Sweet seventeen is the climacteric of the time; fourteen or fifteen is the age of romance. Lady Mary Wortley Montague expresses her astonishment that in Vienna a woman of twenty-five should be thought still to have charms; with that age she herself associates "wrinkles, a stoop in the shoulders, and grey hairs." Perhaps women grew old early in England. Diane de Poitiers was supposed to have preserved intact her marvellous beauty by the assiduous use of cold water,—an unusual remedy! It was particularly unusual in England. Lord Chesterfield recommends an excellent cosmetic unknown to all the ladies of his acquaintance:

Take of fair clear water *quantum sufficit*; put it into a clean earthen or china basin; then take a clean linen cloth, dip it in that water, and apply it to the face night and morning, or oftener as occasion may require.

The notion of every Englishman of the eighteenth century was: "Catch your wife as she comes straight from the nursery, before she has discernment to discover all the faults of your character, and if she should have the intuition to guess them, dazzle her

parents with the temptation of handsome settlements, and overwhelm her resistance with the parental thunders."

The worst of it was that, after marriage, there was nothing more to be looked for. The women of the Renaissance also had come to regard marriage as something that they could not choose, something thrust upon them by imperious necessity, the necessity of a violent age, in which man was perforce the aggressor or defender, and woman the helpless prey. But they had the consolations of platonic friendship, of intellectual sympathies and interests outside. Thus marriage came to be regarded as a material partnership, a co-operation for certain prosaic ends of protection and worldly advancement; something uninteresting, purely compulsory, but honest and sound. To the women of the eighteenth century, as a rule, any of these intellectual interests and sympathies were denied. Marriage was compulsory and prosaic; all it could offer was a certain amount of external freedom, and sometimes a great deal of material luxury and wealth; but there was nothing better, nothing beyond. It was not surprising that most of these raw inexperienced girls made an extravagant use of the liberty which marriage gave, and were over-eager to get at least the satisfaction of luxury from it. It was not surprising that many a young girl, who, like Lady Teazle, had been accustomed till lately to ride to the market-town (the only town of her knowledge) on a pillion behind the coachman, when she found herself sold to some doting old man, should be passionate in exacting the price; should be insatiably greedy of fashionable pleasures, masquerades, *ridottos*, routs, dinners, and the card-table. Their ignorance had fired their imagination, secluded

as they had been in gloomy old manor-houses, surrounded only by country bumpkins, by seasoned old fox-hunters, who could not remember having gone to bed sober in their lives, and by old women whose minds had room for no other thoughts than the making of preserves, tansy pudding, and cordial of clo' gillie-flower. The ignorance of these young girls brought up in this stupid seclusion, fired their imagination with the passion of the court and the town. And when they had worn off the first lustre, there was nothing else to which they could turn to give their lives a new object; they could only quicken the pace, and leave themselves no leisure for reflection, in the bustle of strenuous idleness. They had no other resources, these uneducated, unformed girls, snapped up as they stepped out of the nursery by husbands who were amateurs of ignorance. How would Sophia employ her time when she was Mrs. Jones? With her household, her children, and her poultry, says Fielding. That is Fielding's ideal of wifely virtue; the old Roman one, "*Domum servavit, lanam fecit* (she stopped at home and spun)." Will Sophia develope into an Amelia, whose great delight was to prepare for Captain Booth his favourite supper, a fowl and egg-sauce, and mutton-broth? That is the wife of Fielding's imagination. No wonder Fielding married his housemaid. But I think he is mistaken in his Sophia. She has a spirit of her own, that girl. How she attacked Honour, her woman, who had informed her of one of Jones's innumerable deviations from the rule of right, so often and powerfully expounded to him by his tutor Square! She retorted that Mistress Honour was jealous of the person that Jones had favoured with his attentions, and she did it in so pungent an insinuation that it cannot be quoted here.

No; however submissive Sophia might be to the father who was always ready to "lend her a flick," as he phrased it, if she contradicted him, or to turn her adrift in her smock if she thwarted him, she would know how to take a different course with Jones. The happy pair, I believe, very soon set up a coach and a large retinue of servants, and entertained all the gentry of the county. Presently that same coach, with six horses and outriders, carried them up to town, and they hired apartments near St. James's. Sophia soon learned the charms of the opera; she learned to despise the unfashionable Handel, whose music she always wanted to be playing when her father asked for OLD SIR SIMON THE KING; she became a notable hand at codille. There are few who will not think it sheer blasphemy if I suggest that we may derive some notion of Sophia, married and settled in town, from Lady Booby, the lady of fashion so smitten with the masculine beauty of Joseph Andrews.

"What a dreary old age you are laying up for yourself," was once the warning addressed to those who confessed to not having learned whist. Cards were the panacea of every affliction in the eighteenth century. They were not only the consolation of old age; they were the substitute for love, for conversation, for intellectual pursuits. Some one writing in praise of cards (I think it is Lord Chesterfield) says:

Scandal was never heard at a card-table. We need never go to church to ridicule the parsons, or stay at home to be the plague of husbands or servants. In short, if women would escape the pursuit of men, the drudgery of wives, the cares of parents, and the plagues of home, their security is PLAY.

The women of the Renaissance

avoided cards because at cards men and women were put on the same level; the usual courtesies and respect which woman claims are apt to be forgotten in the sport which women share with men. But above all they disliked cards because cards destroyed conversation. In the eighteenth century in England women did not know what conversation was. We may take the testimony of Swift, for Swift was the friend of a woman who was fitted, if any woman ever was, to reign in more favourable circumstances as an intellectual queen; there were no other women like Stella. In a letter of advice to a very young lady on her marriage, he writes:

It has sometimes moved me with pity to see the lady of the house forced to withdraw immediately after dinner, and this in families where there is not much drinking; as if it were an established maxim that women are incapable of all conversation. In a room where both sexes meet, if the men are discoursing upon any general subject, the ladies never think it their business to partake in what passes, but in a separate clique entertain each other with the price and choice of lace and silk, and what dresses they liked or disapproved at the church or the playhouse.

Swift by no means approved of the exclusion of women from a share in men's society, low as was his opinion of the capacity of the women of his day. To this exclusion he attributes the great degeneracy of conversation.

I take the highest period of politeness in England to have been the peaceable part of King Charles the First's reign, and from what we read of those times, as well as from the accounts I have formerly met with from some who lived in that court, the methods then used for raising and cultivating conversations were altogether different from ours: several ladies, whom we find celebrated by the poets of that age, had assemblies at their houses, where persons

of the best understanding, and of both sexes, met to pass the evenings in discoursing upon whatever agreeable subjects were occasionally started; and although we are apt to ridicule the sublime Platonic notions they had, or personated, in love and friendship, I conceive their refinements were grounded upon reason, and that a little grain of romance is no ill ingredient to preserve and exalt the dignity of human nature.

Swift recommends his young lady to remedy her deficiencies by keeping the company of men, rather than of women. "To say the truth," he exclaims, "I never yet knew a tolerable woman to be fond of the society of her own sex." He recommends also a course of study; she must get a collection of histories and travels. She must not forget that, with all her brains, she can never arrive in point of learning to the perfection of a schoolboy. The Queen Anne's men and the Georgians bore very hard on the learning of women, perhaps because most of them felt that their own was not very strong. Here is Smollett's savage picture of a learned lady:

She sat in her study, with one foot on the ground, and the other upon a high stool at some distance from her seat; her sandy locks hung down, in a disorder I cannot call beautiful, from her head, which was deprived of its cap, for the benefit of scratching, with one hand, while she held the stump of a pen in the other. Her forehead was high and wrinkled; her eyes were large, grey and prominent; her nose was long, sharp and aquiline; her mouth of vast capacity; her visage meagre and freckled, and her chin peaked like a shoemaker's paring-knife; her upper lip retained a large quantity of plain Spanish snuff, which, by continual falling had embroidered her neck, not naturally very white, and the breast of her gown, that flowed about her with a negligence truly poetic, discovering linen that was very fine, and to all appearance never washed but in Castalian streams. Around her lay heaps of books, globes, quadrants, telescopes and

other learned apparatus. Her snuff-box stood at her right hand. . . She being in a reverie when we entered, the maid did not think fit to disturb her; so that we waited some minutes unobserved, during which time she bit her quill several times, altered her position, made many wry faces, and at length with an air of triumph repeated aloud:

"Nor dare the immortal gods my rage oppose."

Sophia Western, having an aunt of very wide reading, with a weakness for politics, had received an extensive education, which, Fielding takes care to assure us, had not spoiled her charm. Her aunt had read Rapin's HISTORY OF ENGLAND, Echard's ROMAN HISTORY, a great many French memoirs, and all the political pamphlets of twenty years past. There is a learned Mrs. Bennett, the widow of a clergyman, who is contrasted, much to her disadvantage, with Amelia. Amelia's reading had been restricted to English plays and poetry, the divinity of the great and learned Dr. Barrow, and the histories of the excellent Dr. Burnet. But Amelia reads no longer; her cares, her hopes are all centred about — roast fowls and egg-sauce. Amelia is perfection. Mrs. Bennett, on the other hand, quotes Virgil most unseasonably. Mrs. Bennett's reputation has not escaped scandal, though that was not her fault; but, insinuates Fielding, she is addicted to the use of drams and cordials. Tippling and scholarship, they naturally go together,—especially in a woman! Besides, when Dr. Harrison quotes Homer, and asks if she follows, she confesses "she has not a Greek ear," but would understand if she saw the passage in the Delphin Homer,—which, by the way, had a Latin paraphrase alongside.

That is like poor Lady Luxborough, who thought she would distinguish

herself from her frivolous contemporaries. She tried, in a mild way, to keep up a literary correspondence with Shenstone, and other little poetical lights. She writes to Shenstone that she has been searching Francis's Horace for a motto to put on Somerville's tomb: "And Mr. John Reynolds, happening to come in, looked it over with me, and we both hit upon a short one." Now Dr. Francis's Horace has an English verse translation on alternate pages; but, for all that, it was fortunate Mr. John Reynolds happened to come in then with his assistance.

Such was the romance, the intellectual power, the conversational charm, the training and culture of the woman of the eighteenth century. And here is the ideal woman by the greatest poet of the century:

Blest with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
She who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear;
She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys;
Lets fops or fortune fly which way they will,
Disdains all loss of tickets or codille;
Spleen, vapours, or small-pox, above them all,
And mistress of herself, though China fall.

That is the true greatness of woman,—not to be jealous of her sister or her daughter; to dissimulate her governance of her husband; not

to lose her temper when a favourite jar is broken!

If we ask ourselves what made such a reaction from the high qualities and influence of the women Platonists of the Renaissance, we naturally refer, first of all, to the fatal effects of furious religious and political strife. The Court had come back, at the Restoration, on the crest of a wave of wild dissipation unqualified by any intellectual refinement. Something may be attributed to the character of the Sovereigns. The first two Georges—what an influence they must have exerted, through their Court, on the country! Queen Anne may have helped the position. When a woman is on the throne, women may be expected to reign in society. But what a woman this monarch was! Fattest and most stupid of her sex, it was whispered that she put away two or three bottles of port daily.

It may seem futile to trace so precisely the psychology of woman in a century when her culture and her influence were at so low an ebb. But the eighteenth century has left its mark on the English race, and has its analogues in society to-day. Its materialism is by no means alien to the tone of society at the present day, and the supremacy of codille is mirrored in the all-powerful fascination of bridge. And the eighteenth century gave that bias to social interests by which woman, when she claimed the dormant right of personality, determined to assert it, not in the *salon*, but at the public meeting or in the committee-room. The feminism of to-day, whatever we may think of it, is in the direct line from the woman of the eighteenth century.

J. A. NICKLIN.

A CLASSICAL EDUCATION.

THERE is undoubtedly a good deal of dissatisfaction abroad at the present time about the methods and results of secondary education. Many parents are found to take a strongly utilitarian line of comment, and to say that a boy who has been through a public school and a university is, as a rule, entirely unequipped to fight the battle of life. Boys themselves, in so far as they have any thoughts on the matter at all, seem inclined to take the same view. They tend to complain that they have no practical outfit for life, and at the same time they are not conscious of having any particular intellectual interests; or if they have intellectual interests, they are inclined to maintain that they have arrived at them in spite of, and not through, their education. Meanwhile schoolmasters, as a rule, tend to take a strongly anti-utilitarian view; as a prominent educator said to me the other day: "We are not so much fighting for the classics as against short-hand!"

On the other hand, the public schools certainly enjoy a considerable popularity, in spite of the criticisms so freely made upon them, even in spite of the grumbling of parents; lists are full to overflowing; and very few fathers, in spite of their animadversions, show any signs of preferring that their boys should be privately educated. Everyone seems to be agreed that the public-school type is a wholesome and manly, though not an intellectual, type, and that, though it is generally necessary, at the end of an elaborate education, to provide boys with a special preparation

for some practical line of life, they tend as a rule to do well in the world.

Moreover it is clear that the dissatisfaction which appears to be felt with the type of classical education prevailing at most public schools is not by any means universal. A strong attempt was lately made at Cambridge to displace compulsory Greek from the curriculum; the idea was, no doubt, to attempt to modernise education in a practical form, and to simplify the congested curriculum of the schools. But this proposal was rejected by a large majority; the voters being members of the University drawn from all classes of the community, and presumably, in many cases, parents who undoubtedly believed that the best interests of education were hereby endangered.

The object of this paper will be to discuss the merits and demerits of the classical system from the point of view of one who for nearly twenty years held a classical mastership at a leading public school, and to indicate improvements that may seem desirable or possible.

The defenders of the classical system have two main points upon which they rest their case. They maintain that, in the first place, classics provide the best gymnastic for the mind, and cultivate lucidity of thought and intellectual vigour. They say, in the second place, that the classics introduce boys to the best and most permanent literatures in the world, and are thereby the best vehicles for communicating

literary taste, intellectual interest, and liberality of mind.

To take these points in order, it may, I think, be fairly maintained that for boys of definite linguistic ability the classics are an excellent vehicle of instruction. Greek and Latin are languages which provide an excellent contrast. Greek is perhaps the most elastic medium for the expression of thought that exists. Its grammatical rules are simple, and at the same time it lends itself with wonderful facility to the unconstrained expression of complicated thought. Latin on the other hand is the severest and most logical of languages; its rules are complicated, but it is absolutely exact. Its structure is firm, rational, and invariable. We have then, it may be conceded, two admirable educational vehicles ready to our hand in these ancient languages.

To take the second point, the value of the literatures of Latin and Greek: there is no sort of doubt that anyone who has a mastery of Greek literature has a mind capable of entering into the subtlest literary effects. To name but a few Greek authors, we have in Homer the perfection of transparent simplicity, in Plato the most delicate charm. Sophocles is a master of statuesque purity, Æschylus of sublimity; Aristophanes shows a combination of almost unequalled humour with flashes of high poetical conception; Thucydides is pre-eminent for terse and graphic description; Xenophon a model of narrative interest, while the Greek Anthology contains some of the most exquisite poetry that has ever been produced.

To turn to Latin, we have in Virgil a treasure of the purest romantic poetry, in Horace a finished crispness of expression, in Livy an abundance of felicitous, romantic prose, in Cicero an easy elegance, in Tacitus a bril-

liant display of antithetical and epigrammatic style. There is of course no comparison possible between Latin and Greek literature; but the fact that Latin is interwoven with the very fibre of our own and kindred tongues, constitutes a solid reason for making it a subject of study.

Thus we have a strong *prima facie* case for continuing to use these languages for educational purposes; and there is, moreover, a not inconsiderable practical reason as well, namely, that the apparatus both of books, and of classically trained teachers, is elaborate and complete.

At the same time it is certain that, for some reason or other,—a point which shall be discussed later—the net result of the teaching of these languages is very small. Boys of ability, or rather of definite linguistic and literary ability, do certainly profit by their classical education, and are turned out both capable and intellectually interested. But this is a small percentage, and may be said to be fairly represented by those who take classical honour degrees at the universities.

The case is far different with the average boy. He leaves the university with no real proficiency in either Latin or Greek; he cannot as a rule make out the sense of a simple passage in either language; he cannot write the simplest Latin or Greek prose without a great crop of mistakes. A boy who has given, say, twelve years mainly to the study of two languages, ought surely to be able to use them with moderate facility; but it cannot be pretended that he has as a rule any mastery of either.

Then, as to literary appreciation, I can only say that my experience is that the average boy has no conception, when dealing with Greek and Latin, that he is in the presence of literature at all; he cannot disci-

minate style, he cannot relish the simplest literary effects. The veil of the unfamiliar languages hangs heavily between him and the thought.

Now the essence of a training in the language and literature of a nation is to give a sense of intellectual perspective; the insight which is given into the occupations, the habits of thought, the point of view of other nations, saves us from being narrow-minded, limited, and provincial in view. But I never had any evidence that the average boy entered in the least degree into the Greek or Latin spirit. He had never reached that stage. He was kept kicking his heels in the ante-room of language. The short lessons, —twenty or thirty lines of Latin or Greek—the necessity of committing to memory abstruse grammatical forms, the composing of prose and verse in an unfamiliar medium; these things, however valuable in themselves, effectually prevented any mastery or breadth of view.

Then, too, the steady tendency to introduce modern subjects into the school curriculum has thrust the classics into a corner,—a large corner it is true, but still a corner. When a boy has to learn divinity, modern history, geography, French, science, arithmetic, Euclid, and algebra, as well as classics, it cannot be pretended that classics have a fair chance. And yet the proportion of time allotted to classics makes it impossible for any real progress to be made in these modern subjects.

It is clear then that some simplification must be attempted. The bag is packed fuller than it can hold. If it is determined to make classics the chief vehicle of education, then classics must be given a fair field; modern subjects must be resolutely excluded. History and

geography must be kept severely classical; science and mathematics must be sternly curtailed.

Moreover, in the case of boys of average ability, who are to learn the classics thoroughly, a different method of teaching must be pursued. Composition must be largely dropped, retaining only Latin prose, as a training in logical expression and precision. Pure grammar must be to a great extent given up; the long lists of anomalous forms, of rare occurrence, must be set aside. Certain lessons must still be learnt in minute detail, with careful attention to structure and syntax; but books must also be read in large masses, and a vocabulary acquired; and boys must, at all costs, obtain an insight into the logical order of Greek and Latin thought, so that the arrangement of sentences shall no longer be a barrier to the comprehension of them. A boy thus educated might hope to have at least a certain mastery of the classics; he would be able to read them without the assistance of a crib; he would have some knowledge of ancient conditions and modes of thought. He would at least feel that he knew two subjects well, instead of a great number of subjects in a slipshod manner.

But the question is, is the above programme a practical one? and I would unhesitatingly reply that it is not. Upon no theory of education, except one of remote ideality, can it be maintained that, at this juncture of the world's history, it is right to keep boys in entire ignorance of modern conditions. In this age of universal expansion, to leave boys unacquainted with the movement of modern history, with the geographical conditions of the world, with the tremendous discoveries of science, with modern literature, with modern thought, is

little short of grotesque. It must be kept in mind that the majority of the boys who go to public schools will have very little time in after life for completing their education. No doubt all or most of these modern subjects are accessible to people of leisure and of real intellectual eagerness. But it cannot be contended that most boys, after leaving school, will have the opportunity of pursuing the study of modern history, the ramifications of science, the sociological or economical questions which concern the race, the treasures of literature that exist in our own language, to say nothing of other modern languages.

I was myself at school in days when education was even more severely classical than it is at present. When I completed my technical education at the age of twenty-two I was a moderate classical scholar, and I can only say that it gradually dawned on me, with a species of dismay, how entirely uneducated I was. The whole range of modern interests was, so far as my education had gone, a sealed book to me; and I cannot honestly say that I think that this ignorance was compensated for by a shallow knowledge of the conditions of Greek and Roman life, and a certain literary facility in the use of classical languages.

My own belief is that education needs reorganising on much simpler lines. Up till the age of fourteen I should like to see boys educated on purely modern subjects, French, history, science, biblical knowledge, arithmetic. After that date I should like to see a considerable measure of specialisation introduced. It would be by that time be possible to see where a boy's aptitude lay. Boys of real linguistic and literary ability could then proceed on classical lines, or

study modern literature scientifically; boys with an interest in subject-matter, as apart from language, would take up history; boys with scientific or mathematical tastes would proceed to study science or mathematics; and boys who had no special aptitude would continue the simple course which they had begun.

But only a certain degree of specialisation would be permitted; and I would take care that a good general education should be at the same time attempted, so that no one should be ignorant of modern conditions or of the vast extension of knowledge and discovery that is taking place.

The obvious advantage of this type of education would be that boys might at least hope to be interested in the subjects they were doing. My own experience indeed convinces me that classics are a subject that do not make at all a general appeal; and that there are even boys of linguistic and literary gifts, who are capable of appreciating literary effects in their own language, and even in contemporary modern languages, who are not capable of appreciating classical effects. It might be that a change of methods might produce an effect, but though I think that the circle of those to whom the classics might appeal would probably be widened, yet I do not believe that it would be more than slightly widened.

But in any case the need for experiment is absolutely imperative. There is no doubt that the present system of classical education produces a large number of boys who are types of intellectual debility, and who are moreover cynical about all intellectual things. It is not just to assume that this would be the same whatever might be taught them, until the experiment of greater elasticity has been tried and failed.

An argument that is frequently urged by schoolmasters against the introduction of English as a school subject is really the strongest condemnation of the existing system and its methods that it is possible to frame. They say, in so many words, that it would be unwise to teach boys English in school because it would spoil their enjoyment of it; and yet this is urged by the same men who urge the retention of the classics because the classical literature is of so august a type. If English would be spoiled by educational processes, then surely it is a conclusive argument against what is practically poisoning the source of intellectual enjoyment. If our educational methods would ruin the boys' enjoyment in the masterpieces of English literature, it may be urged that it is still more unfair to submit to the same process the most magnificent products of the human mind.

It is true that schoolmasters cannot be the first to move in the matter. The movement must originate from the universities. So long as classics are compulsory there, so long must the studies of boys intended for the universities be principally directed to classical subjects. But I have never heard the most ardent defender of compulsory Greek defend the pass examinations of the universities. It is admitted that the standard is deplorably low, and that these examinations are models of slipshod and desultory processes. But if the universities could introduce a greater elasticity, a greater choice of subjects, they could also demand a higher standard.

One of the causes of the present discontent is that the direction of education tends to fall into the hands of men of high intellectual ability, men who are by the nature of their own intellectual equipment almost in-

capable of sympathising with the difficulties of the immature and average mind. Men whose mental grasp is sure, and whose memory is exact, seem often to have no conception of the mental confusion which results from the attempt to teach boys of limited mental range two hard and unfamiliar languages simultaneously.

The perception of this came to me in my professional days, when I had to teach classics to a division of willing, industrious, but unintelligent boys. I found that it was possible, in teaching Latin prose, for instance, to get a grammatical rule, such as the rule of sequence, into their heads; and after we had done a number of examples, they could reproduce the rule with fair fidelity. But when a day or two later we came to deal with Greek prose, they applied, with pathetic zeal, the rules of Latin usage which they had learnt a day or two earlier. The difference of usage was then carefully expounded to them; and by the end of the hour they had to a certain extent mastered the Greek constructions. The following week, when we came to our Latin prose again, the Greek usage was diligently applied; this again was exorcised; but the same melancholy process used to repeat itself week after week, until I realised that the minds with which I was dealing were literally incapable of distinguishing with any exactness between two sets of usages which were in a sense so similar, but yet so essentially different.

And lastly I would say that though I do not at all desire that education should become a purely utilitarian thing, it has a utilitarian side which we dare not neglect. It is absolutely necessary that parents and boys alike should have an active faith in the usefulness of the education communicated to them. It ought not to be necessary to attempt

to prove by argument and demonstration that boys, at the end of an elaborate system of education, are equipped with mental vigour and practical capacity. Any education which does not produce this result is self-condemned; and it must be admitted, however unwillingly, that the education of public schools does not at the present time tend to develop these qualities in the majority of boys. The reason largely is that very few boys or parents,—and indeed by no means all schoolmasters—have any real belief that the subjects taught, or the methods employed, are likely to produce such intellectual fruit. It is essential, then, that before everything confidence must be restored. Boys and parents must be persuaded to believe in the usefulness of education. It rests with the schoolmasters to see that education does not degenerate into a purely utilitarian thing.

As for the general retention of the classics, though I recognise with all my heart the magnificence, the perfection of the ancient literatures, I cannot subscribe to the opinion that modern subjects, history, geography, science and modern literature have no

possibilities of intellectual stimulus in them.

The Greeks themselves drew no cultivation from any sources exterior or anterior to their own national life; and yet we see developed in them the very intellectual spirit that we so earnestly desire to produce.

And finally, whatever system we adopt, I would plead that it must be adopted whole-heartedly and in its entirety. If the collective wisdom of the nation dictates that the staple of education should be classical, then let it be really and truly classical. What we are at present suffering from is an attempt to compress into a few brief years of boyhood a confused and desultory mixture of two or three systems; I for one should deplore it with all my heart if the reactionary spirit prevailed. I feel with an intensity, which I am hardly capable of expressing, the absolute necessity of putting boys in touch with the thought of our own wonderful age; but if that is impossible, if we must continue to educate upon traditional lines and upon remote literatures, then at all events let us see that they have their perfect work.

ARTHUR C. BENSON.

THE FELLOW-WORKERS OF VOLTAIRE.

VI.—CONDORCET.

VOLTAIRE was the son of a lawyer, and Diderot the son of a cutler; D'Alembert was a no-man's child, educated in a tradesman's family; Grimm and Galiani were foreigners in the country to which they gave their talents. Of all Voltaire's Fellow-workers Condorcet alone came from the order their work was pledged, not to benefit but, to destroy. He lived to see the fatal and tremendous consequences of his principles, and was true to them in prison and in death. The Aristocrat who lost his life through the People to whom he had devoted it,—this was Marie Nicolas Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet.

Born in 1743 at Ribemont, a town in Picardy, Condorcet belonged to a noble family highly connected both with the Church and the Army. His father was a captain of cavalry and designed his son for the same aristocratic post. But he died when the child was four; and a devout mother vowed him to the Virgin and dressed him in white frocks like a little girl, so that the luckless Caritat could neither run nor jump as nature bade him, and owed to his mother's piety a weakness in his limbs from which he never recovered.

His first schoolmasters were the Jesuits. What is one to make of the fact that they had as virgin soil the intellects of at least four of their mightiest and fiercest opponents,—Voltaire, Diderot, Turgot, and Condorcet?

At eleven Caritat was under their

supervision, with his home influence pressing him to their way of thought, with an uncle a bishop, and Cardinal de Bernis a relative. At thirteen he was sent to Rheims, to be more completely under their control. At fifteen he came up to Paris, and began at the College of Navarre to study mathematics and to think for himself; and when once a mind has begun to do that, nothing can stop it. His treatment of a particularly difficult theme brought him the acquaintance of d'Alembert, who first saw in the boy, who was to be to him as a son, a kindred genius, a future colleague at the Academy. Caritat was only seventeen when he introduced himself to his other great friend, Turgot, writing him a letter on justice and virtue which already proclaimed this college student a thinker of a high order. An essay on Integral Calculus, which he presented at the Academy of Sciences when he was twenty-two, attracted to him the flattering notice of the famous mathematician Lagrange. There was in it not only the ardour of youth and a buoyant fecundity of idea, but a profundity of learning not at all youthful.

Caritat was now no longer a student, but still lodging in Paris. In 1769 when he was twenty-six he entered the French Academy of Sciences in opposition to the wishes of all his relatives who never pardoned him, he said, for not becoming a captain of cavalry.

The man who ought, by the solemn

unwritten laws of the family compact, to have been a soldier, was soon acknowledged as one of the finest original thinkers of his age, the friend of d'Alembert and of Voltaire, and something yet greater than a thinker,—greater than any great man's friend—a practical reformer and a generous lover of human kind.

The character of Condorcet,—he who with Turgot has been said to have been the highest intellectual and moral personality of his century—has in it much not only infinitely good, but also infinitely attractive. Perfectly simple and modest, somewhat shy in the social world which he himself defined as “dissipation without pleasure, vanity without motive, and idleness without rest,” among his intimates no one could have been more gay, witty, and natural. If his acquaintance found him cold, his friends knew well what a tender and generous soul shone in the thoughtful eyes. If he listened to a tale of sorrow coldly and critically almost, while others were commiserating the unfortunate, Condorcet was remedying the misfortune. Though he never could profess affection, he knew better than any man how to prove it; and if all his principles were stern, all his deeds were gentle. So quiet in his tastes that he had no use for riches, wholly without the arrogance and the blindness which distinguished his class, he had its every merit and not one of its faults; and he well deserved the title Voltaire gave him,—“The man of the old chivalry and the old virtue.”

In 1770, when he was twenty-seven, he went with d'Alembert to stay at Ferney. Voltaire was delighted with him. Here was a man after his own heart, with the same hatred for oppression and fanaticism and the same zeal for humanity as himself, and with better chances of

serving it. The Patriarch did not add, as he might have added, that this young Condorcet had a thousand virtues a Voltaire could never compass,—that he was pure in life and hated a lie, that he was wholly without jealousy, without vanity, and without meanness. As for Caritat, he worshipped at the feet of a master of whom his friendship with d'Alembert had already proclaimed him a pupil. What nights and days the three had together! Voltaire enlisted the quiet, practical help of Condorcet for the rehabilitation of Chevalier de la Barre, for the revision of the process of d'Etallonde; and honoured his guest by becoming his editor and helper in the Critical Commentary on Pascal which Condorcet produced later. Because his humility was the humility of a just mind and his modesty of the kind that scorns to cringe, Condorcet's admiration for his host did not blind him to his literary faults or make him meanly spare them; and while it was Condorcet who spoke in warm eulogy of his “dear and illustrious master” as working not for his glory but for his cause, it was also Condorcet who deprecated that production of Voltaire's senility, *IRÈNE*. Sometimes the three friends would talk over the future of France,—the two older men who had done much to mould that future and the young man who had much to do. “You will see great days,” wrote old Voltaire afterwards to his guest; “you will make them.”

The visit lasted a fortnight, and was a liberal education indeed. Two years later Condorcet received the crown of his success as a mathematician and was made Perpetual Secretary of the Academy of Sciences, where he wrote *eloges* of the savants who had belonged to it, with the noble motto for ever in his mind, “One owes to the dead only what

is useful to the living,—justice and truth."

So far, Condorcet had been a mathematician alone. Such knowledge freed and redeemed the world,—in time, but the time was long. Beneath that quiet exterior, palpitating through his leisurely exact studies at the College of Navarre and the Academy, there throbbed in this man's breast a vaster and fiercer passion than any passion for knowledge,—the passion for human kind. Where did young Condorcet come by that ruling idea of his that opened to him a field of labour which he must till all his days, unremittingly, before the night cometh when no man can work—that idea which should steel him to endure, exulting, the cruellest torments of life and death,—“the infinite perfectibility of human nature, the infinite augmentation of human happiness”?

The friend of d'Alembert was Condorcet the geometrician; the friend of Turgot was Condorcet the reformer.

In August, 1774, Turgot was made Controller-General. He appointed Condorcet his Inspector of Coinage at a salary of £240 a year, which Condorcet never accepted. The pair had work to do, which only they could do, and do together. The vexed subject of Trade in Grain,—“for a moment,” says Robinet, “the whole question of the Revolution lay in this question of Grain”—incited them to fierce battle for what they took to be the cause of freedom against the cause of that well-meaning commonplace, Necker the Genevan banker. Condorcet attacked Necker with a rare, fierce malignity, and wrote two stinging pamphlets on the subject which made him many enemies. But there were other reforms waiting the doing, less in importance then and greater in importance now. To curtail the advantages of the privileged classes, to

open for commerce the rivers of central France, to abolish the slave-trade, and to make the nobility share in the taxation,—these were the tasks into which this noble put his life and his soul. That every reform meant loss to himself, that all his interests were vested in the privileges he sought to destroy, that every human tie drew him towards the old order, makes his work for the new nobler than that of his fellow-workers. They had nothing to gain; Condorcet had everything to lose.

In May, 1776, the Queen demanded that Turgot should be dismissed from office and sent to the Bastille; and, in part, she had her way, for her own ruin and that of France. Condorcet renounced his Inspectorship of Coinage; he would not serve under another master. Turgot's death in 1781 was the first great sorrow of his life. His other friend, d'Alembert, won for him a seat in the Academy in 1782; and in the next year he too died. Condorcet was always with him, with that quiet and generous devotion which says nothing and does much. D'Alembert left to him the task of providing annuities for two old servants, and Condorcet accepted the obligation as a privilege, and fulfilled it scrupulously in his own poverty and ruin. He was now not a little lonely. His relatives still resented his choice of a profession; his best friends were dead; the great master of their party had preceded them. From social duties Caritat had long ago freed himself. He was three and forty years old, occupied in writing that *Life of Turgot* which is a declaration of his own principles and policy, in contributing to the *Encyclopædia*, and deeply absorbed in public labours, when he first met Mademoiselle Sophie de Grouchy.

If the supreme blessing of life be a happy marriage, then Condorcet was a

fortunate man indeed. Mademoiselle was full twenty years younger than himself, very girlish in face and figure, with a bright cultivated mind, and a rare capacity for love and tenderness. He found in her what is uncommon even in happy marriages perhaps,—his wife was also his friend. From the first she shared his work and his love for his fellow-men, approved of his sacrifices, and was true not only to him, but also to his example of unselfish courage and unflinching devotion, to the end of her life.

For the moment—for what a brief moment!—their world looked smiling enough.

Condorcet abandoned himself to his happiness, with the strong passion of a strong man who has never wasted his heart in lighter feelings. For a dowry, — so essential to a French marriage—he wholly forgot to stipulate. For the opinion of his friends, who considered a married geometrician as a sort of freak of Nature, he cared nothing; and when they saw his wife, and forgave him, their pardon was as little to him as their blame.

The two settled on the Quai de Conti in a house where Caritat had previously lived with his mother. At that Hotel des Monnaies Sophie held her *salon* (*le foyer de la République* men called it) where she received, with a youthful charm and grace, not only her husband's French political friends, but also Lord Stormont the English Ambassador, Wilkes, Garrick, Sterne, Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, Macintosh, and Adam Smith. Large and shy, with a little awkwardness even in his manner, it was not Condorcet but his wife who was socially successful; and his wife, who was the one woman in a thousand who estimated social success at its just value, was great in knowing her husband to be much greater.

Only two years after their marriage Condorcet entered the arena as one of the earliest, and perhaps the most noteworthy, of all champions of Women's Rights. On the ground of their equal intelligence he claimed for them equal privileges with men, and ignored the very suggestion that their bodily weakness and inferiority are reproduced in their minds. He judged, in fact, all women from one woman. No nobler testimony can be borne to the intellect and character of the Marquise de Condorcet than to say that she deserved as an individual what her example made her husband think of her sex.

It is not a little curious to note that Condorcet, though so wholly faithful and happy himself in the relationship, thought the indissolubility of marriage an evil. In later years he pleaded warmly for the condemnation of mercenary marriages by public opinion, as one of the best means of lessening the inequalities of wealth.

In 1790 the deep happiness of his wedded life was crowned by the birth of his only child, a little girl. But before that, the fierce whirlpool of politics had drawn him into it and he had addressed the electors of the States General and appeared publicly as the enemy of parliaments, sacerdotalism, and the aristocracy, with all his gospel based on two great principles, the natural rights of man and the mutable nature of the constitutions which govern him. He was made member of the municipality of Paris, and in that, his first public function, flung the last gauntlet before his caste and broke for ever with an order of which the smug selfishness was admirably typified by a Farmer-General who said to him, "Why alter things? We are very comfortable."

The fall of the Bastille, the insurrection of October, the journey of the

Royal Family to Paris, he had watched with the calm of one who knows that such things must needs be, who realises the necessity of painful means to a glorious end. To the monarchy he was not at first opposed,—if the King were but a man! But when in June, 1791, came the ignominious flight to Varennes, he rose in a fierce, still wrath and proclaimed the necessity for a Republic. "He has freed himself from us, we are freed from him," said he. "This flight enfranchises us from all our obligations."

Nearly all the Marquis's friends broke with him, and he stood alone. Before his ripened views on royalty were fully known, it had been proposed that he should be the tutor of the Dauphin, and to Sophie that she should be the governess. Husband and wife were in different places when the proposal was made; but though they had never spoken with each other on the subject, they declined the offer almost in the same words. If Condorcet's friends misunderstood him and parted at the parting of the ways, his wife never did. In 1791 he was made member of the Legislative Assembly and became in quick succession its Secretary and its President. As its President he presented to it his Educational Scheme, startlingly modern in its demands that education should be free and unsectarian.

By the order of the Assembly in 1792 there were burnt in Paris the brevets and patents of nobility,—among them the patent of the Marquis Caritat de Condorcet—at the very moment when at the bar of the national tribune the heir of this family demanded that the same measure should be adopted all over France. Not one dissentient voice was raised against the scheme; who indeed should dissent from it when a marquis proposed it? A few months

later he was elected Member of Convention for the Department of Aisne, and the extremist of the Legislative found himself all too moderate for the Convention. And then came the trial of the King.

There was never a time when Condorcet could be called either an orator or a leader of men. Though he had written most of its official addresses, he had appeared but little before the Legislative Assembly. Nervousness caused him always to read any speeches he did make, and a delicate voice robbed them of their effectiveness. His deeds and his character earned him a hearing and applause; and sometimes his complete self-devotion and the white heat of his enthusiasm discounted his manner and touched his hearers with something of his own deathless passion. But he was, as d'Alembert said, a volcano covered with snow, and that audience of his, coarse in fibre, mad for excitement, overwrought, uncontrolled, must needs see the mountain in flames, vomiting lava and death. To be a great orator one must have in a supreme degree the qualities one's hearers have in a lesser degree. The thoughtful reason and the lofty ideas of Condorcet found little counterpart in the parliaments of the Revolution. A Marat or a Danton was what they wanted, or a Fouquier Tinville even, drunk with blood, with his wild hair flung back, and his words shaking with passion, but not this noble, with the high courage of his caste, his stoical Roman face, his scrupulous truthfulness, his unworldly enthusiasms. Worse than all, Condorcet never was for a cause, but always for a principle; and since he followed no party blindly, he was in turn abused by all.

He proved in his own history that to be a great demagogue it is essential to be without too fine a scrupulous-

ness and the more delicate virtues, that to successfully lead the vulgar the first requisite is not to be too much of a gentleman.

Condorcet, though he had broken with monarchy as a possible form of government for France, had still no personal feeling against the monarch. Firmly convinced of his culpability, he was equally convinced that the Convention was not legally competent to judge its King at all; and proposed that he should be tried by a tribunal chosen by the electors of the Departments of France. But to take the judging of its sovereign from the Convention was to take the prey whose blood he has tasted from the tiger. When the great moment came Condorcet was at Auteuil; he hastened to Paris, and arrived at the Assembly a few moments before the King.

In what strange contrast were this noble, serene in strong purpose, with his just mind justly fixed, great in his compassion for his country and not without compassion for his King, and that poor Bourbon, who meant well had he had any fixed meaning, and whom Condorcet has described in an admirable but rarely quoted description as standing before his judges, "rather uneasy than frightened, courageous, but without dignity."

On January 15th, 1793, to the momentous question if the Prisoner at the bar were guilty, Condorcet answered, "Yes"; he had conspired against liberty. On the 17th and 18th the vote was taken on the nature of the punishment to be awarded. Consider the judgment-hall filled with the fierce faces and wild natures of men who, for centuries starved of their liberties, had drunk the first maddening draught of power. Consider that among them this noble alone represented a class they hated worse than they hated royalty itself, that if he had

forsworn it, broken with it, denied it, he had still its high bearing, its maddening self-possession and self-control. We vote for death,—shall you dare to know better? An Orleans sits and speaks against his own kith and kin; why not a noble then who owes him nothing? Condorcet rises in his place and pronounces for exile, the severest penalty in the penal code which is not death. "The punishment of death is against my principles," he said, "and I shall not vote for it. I propose further that the decision of the Convention shall be ratified by an appeal to the people."

On Saturday, June 19th, 1793, the execution of the King having been fixed for the Monday, Condorcet implored his colleagues to neutralise the fatal effect of their decision on the other European Powers by abolishing the punishment of death altogether. With the Terror then struggling to the birth in her wild breast, one of the noblest children of France begged for the suppression of that penalty as the most "efficacious way of perfecting human kind in destroying that leaning to ferocity which has long dishonoured it. Punishments which admit of correction and repentance are the only ones fit for regenerated humanity." In the roar of that fierce storm of human passions, the quiet voice was unheeded, but not unheard. There were those who looked up at the speaker, and remembered his words,—for his ruin.

How far up to this point Condorcet realised his danger is hard to say. A Louis, with the fatal blindness of kingship, might believe to the last that his person really was inviolable, that from the tumbril itself loyal hands would deliver his majesty from the insult of a malefactor's death. But a Condorcet?

The immediate result of his part in the King's trial was that his name

was struck from the roll of the Academies of Petersburg and Berlin. That insult touched him so little that there is not a single allusion to it in his writings.

In the month succeeding the King's death, a Commission of nine members of the Convention, of whom Condorcet was one, laid before it their project for the New Constitution of the Year II., to which Condorcet had written an elaborate preface. The project was not taken. Hérault de Séchelles made a new one. In his bold and scathing criticism upon it,—his APPEAL TO THE FRENCH CITIZENS ON THE PROJECT OF NEW CONSTITUTION—Condorcet signed his own condemnation. On July 8th, 1793, Chabot denounced that Appeal at the Convention. This ex-Marquis, he said, is "a coward, a scoundrel and an Academician. He pretends that his Constitution is better than yours; that primary assemblies ought to be accepted; therefore I propose that he ought to be arrested and brought to the bar." On the strength of this delightful reasoning and without evidence of any kind against him, the Convention decreed that his papers should be sealed and that he should be put under arrest and on the list of those who were to be tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal on the coming third of October. He was further condemned in his absence and declared to be *hors la loi*.

If it is doubtful whether Condorcet realised the probable effect of his opinion and vote in the matter of the King's trial, he had realised to the full the jeopardy in which the Appeal would place him. But he looked now, as he had looked always, not to the effect his deeds might have on his own destiny, but to their effect on the destiny of the race. If the unit could but do his part for the mass, then, having done it, he must be content to

be trampled under its feet, happy, if on his dead body some might rise and catch a glimpse of a Promised Land.

But yet he must save himself if he could. For seven years, through storms of which the story still shakes men's souls, he had known in his own home, first on the Quai de Conti and then in the Rue de Lille, the deep, calm joys of his happy marriage. When the troubles of life come only from without, through the fiercest of such troubles man and wife may be happy still. It is those evils alone which rise from their own characters which can wholly destroy the beauty of life. In the serene and unreserved tenderness of the woman who kept for ever, it is said, some of the virgin freshness of the girl, who united gentleness to strength and courage, who was at once modest and clever, simple and intelligent, Condorcet was given a rich share of the best earth has to offer. Their *salon*, of course, was no more. The beating of the pitiless storm had driven their Englishmen to covert in happier England. But it is only when one is discontented with one's relatives that there is crying need of acquaintances; these two still had each other and their child. Condorcet had much to lose.

To go to the Rue de Lille would be courting death. He escaped first to his country home at Auteuil. From there two friendly doctors took him to a house in the Rue Servandoni, where they had lodged as medical students, belonging to Madame Vernet, the widow of the sculptor, and asked her to shelter a proscribed man. She only enquired if he was a good man. When they answered, "Yes," she consented at once. "Do not lose a moment," were her words; "you can tell me about him later." As to the value of the works of her husband there have

been many opinions, but as to the value of her work there can be only one. Perfectly aware that she was endangering her own life for a fugitive whom she had never seen, and who had not the slightest claim upon her generosity, she sheltered him for nine months, providing him all the time with every necessary of life and without the smallest hope of repayment. When he did leave her at last, he had to steal away from her self-sacrificing care by a subterfuge, like a thief. Strong, simple and energetic, high in courage and devotion, Madame Vernet is one of the unsung heroines of history.

Condorcet's condition was destitute indeed. As an outlaw all his money had been seized. For himself that might have been bearable; even to the fate he foresaw too clearly he could be indifferent, for himself. One Sarret, to whom Madame Vernet was privately married and who lived in the house, speaks of the fugitive's gentleness, patience, and resignation. He had given to his country his talents, his time, his fortune, his rank; and when she turned and trampled him beneath her angry feet, he had for her nothing but compassion and the strong hope of a day that would dawn upon her clear and fair, after the storm was past. But in the knowledge that he had brought ruin and disgrace on what he loved best in the world, Condorcet sounded one of the great depths of human suffering. As the wife of an outlaw, Madame Condorcet was not only penniless, but could not even sleep in the capital. Wholly dependent on her was her little girl of three years old, a young sister, and an old governess. She was herself still young and brought up in a class unused to work, in the sense of work to make money, for generations. But there was in her soul the great

courage of a great love. The talents which had once charmed her *salon* she now turned to a means of livelihood. When her house at Auteuil was invaded by Republican soldiers, Madame softened their hearts and earned a pittance by taking their portraits. Twice a week, disguised as a peasant, she came on foot from Auteuil to Paris, passed through the gates with the fierce crowds thronging to the executions in the Place de la Révolution, and by painting miniatures of the condemned in the prisons, of proscribed men lying hidden in strange retreats, or of middle-class citizens, made enough to support her little household. Then, sometimes, she would creep to the Rue Servandoni, and for a few minutes forget parting, death, and the terrors of the unknown future, in her husband's arms. He might well write, as he did write but a little while before he died, that even then he was not all unhappy; he had served his country and had had her heart.

He spent the long days of his hiding almost entirely in writing. He began by an exposition of his principles and conduct during the Revolution and gave an account of his whole public career. He was writing it when on October 3rd, 1793, he was placed on the list of the Members of Convention before the Revolutionary Tribunal, with Vergniaud, Brissot, and others, accused of conspiring against the unity of the Republic, declared an emigrant, and condemned to death.

On the 31st of the same month came the fall of the Girondins. Though not himself a Girondin they had been once his friends, and in their ruin he saw the immediate presage of his own; and his own meant that also of Madame Vernet. He went to her at once. "The law is clear," he told her; "if I am

discovered here you will die as I shall. I am without the pale of the law; I cannot remain here longer," Though he might be without the law, was her answer, he was not without the law of humanity; and she bade him stay where he was.

His wife, in her peasant's dress, came to him then for one of those brief moments stolen from Heaven. She knew him well. That Justification of his conduct, his Apologia, that looking back on deeds and sacrifices meant to restore the Golden Age to men and which had brought, or so it seemed, the hell of the Terror, this was no fit work for him now. Look ahead! Look on to that new country which your pure patriotism and your self-devotion,—ay, and this Terror itself—shall have helped to make, that warless world of equal rights and ever widening knowledge, the beautiful dream of a sinless and sorrowless earth, which may yet be realised in part. On the manuscript of the Justification there is written in her hand "*Left at my request to write the History of the Progress of the Human Mind.*"

In the very shadow of death Condorcet told the story of men's progress toward life, of the evolution of their understanding from the earliest times until now. Calm, just, and serene, with not an intemperate line, not an angry thought, the work reads as if it had been written by some tranquil philosopher who had seen his plan for man's redemption adopted, and had received for his labour honours, peace, and competence. It does not escape, as has been justly said, the contagion of chimæra. Condorcet, like too many enthusiasts, thought his own way of salvation for man the only way; he believed his own magnificent dream to be the only possible Utopia.

Beneath the guillotine and in social convulsions for which history has no parallel, he looked through and past them, in that last great chapter, in the exalted spirit of noble prophecy, to that Golden Age which must surely one day come.

BUT THE PROGRESS OF THE HUMAN MIND is something more than a splendid hope, more than the greatest and most famous of its author's works. It bears the noblest testimony to the character of him who in the supreme hour of his individual life could thus forget himself, and in the midst of personal ruin foresee with exultant joy the salvation of the race. It remains for ever among the masterpieces which men cannot afford to forget.

During his hiding Condorcet also wrote THE LETTER OF JUNIUS TO WILLIAM PITT in which he expresses his aversion for Pitt, and an essay, never printed, ON THE PHYSICAL DEGRADATION OF THE ROYAL RACES, and planned a universal philosophical language. And then in December, 1793, he wrote THE LETTER OF A POLISH EXILE IN SIBERIA TO HIS WIFE, a poem in which another exile bade farewell to the woman he loved.

The death-shadows were creeping closer now. In March, 1794, he finished THE PROGRESS OF THE HUMAN MIND. But before that he had decided to leave Madame Vernet; her danger was too great. Early in January he had begun writing his last wishes, the ADVICE OF A PROSCRIBED FATHER TO HIS DAUGHTER. The little girl was the child of too deep a love not to be infinitely dear. To what was he leaving her? Throughout these cruel months, the last drop in his cup of bitterness had been the strong conviction that his wife would share his own fate, was doomed, like himself, to the guillotine. "If my daughter is destined to lose every-

thing,"—even to himself he could not frame the dread thought in plainer words. But if even that thing must be, then he left Madame Vernet, who had been so true to him, the guardian of his child, begging that she might have a liberal education which would help her to earn her own livelihood, and in particular that she might learn English, so that if need came she could seek the help of her mother's English friends. To the little girl herself he left words of calm and beautiful counsel, which are in themselves a possession. Some of that "light which never was on land or sea" lies surely on those tender and gracious lines, something of the serene illumination that shines on a dying face.

In the early morning of April 5th, 1794, the Marquis of Condorcet laid down his pen for the last time. At ten o'clock on that day he slipped out of the house in the Rue Servandoni, unknown to Madame Vernet, and in spite of the passionate protests of Sarret, her husband, who followed him out into the street, praying him to return. Condorcet was in his usual disguise, and many months' confinement indoors, and the old weakness in his limbs, made walking a difficulty. He was at the door almost of the fatal prisons of the Carmes and the Luxembourg; but no persuasions could make him return. He had heard rumours of a domiciliary visit to be made immediately to Madame Vernet's house and, were he found there, she must be ruined. Sarret implored in vain. The fugitive reached the Maine barrier in safety and turned in the direction of Fontenay-aux-Roses. At every step his pain and difficulty in walking increased. But at three o'clock in the afternoon he safely reached the country house of his old friends, the Suard. Madame Suard may be re-

membered as the very enthusiastic and vivacious little lady who had visited Voltaire and who has recorded Voltaire's warm love and admiration for her friend Condorcet. "Our dear and good Condorcet," Madame Suard had called him. She and her husband had been his intimate friends in prosperity; how could he do better than come to them in his need?

It must in justice be said of the Suard that the accounts of their conduct are confused. But the generally accepted, as well as the most probable, story does not redound to their credit. True, they had many excuses; but there has never been any act of treachery for which the treacherous have not been able to adduce a plausible reason.

Condorcet asked them for one night's lodging, and they replied that such hospitality would be quite as dangerous for himself as for them. Still, they could give him money, some ointment for a chafed leg due to his long walk, and a copy of Horace to amuse his leisure. They promised also not to lock their garden-gate that night, so that in case of urgent need he could make use of it. With this, they sent him away. Madame Vernet, searching for him in that neighbourhood a little while after, declared that she tried the garden-gate and found it rusty and immovable. Her own door, in lawless Paris, was open night and day that, if he should return to her, she should not fail him. Whether he attempted to make use of the Suard's timid hospitality is not known. One would think of Condorcet that he did not. The 6th of April he spent in sufferings and privations which can only be guessed. On April 7th a tall man, gaunt and famished, with a wound in his leg, went into an inn of Clamart and asked for an omelette. Mine host, looking at him suspiciously, asked how

many eggs he would have in his omelette. The Marquis, with no kind of idea of the number of eggs a working-man, or any man for that matter, expects in his omelette, said a dozen. M. Crépinet, the innkeeper, was a shrewd person as well as one of the municipals of the Commune. A queer workman this, he thought, and asked for his name. Peter Simon, was the answer. Papers? There were no papers. Occupation? Well, on the spur of the moment, a carpenter. His hands, whose only tool had been a pen, gave him the lie. Crépinet, pleased with his own sharpness, had this strange carpenter arrested and marched toward Bourglala-Reine. How in these supreme moments Condorcet felt and acted is not on record. But in the great crises men unconsciously produce that character which they have formed in the trivial round of daily life, and he who would be great at great moments must be a great character by his own fireside and in the dull routine of his ordinary work. The strong, quiet Condorcet was surely strong and quiet still, "the victim of his foes," as he had said, "but never their instrument or their dupe." On that weary way a compassionate vine-dresser took pity on his limping condition, and lent him a horse.

On the morning of April 8th, 1794, when the jailor of the prison of Bourglala-Reine came to hand over the new prisoner to the *gendarmes* who had arrived to take him to Paris, the Marquis de Condorcet was found dead in his cell. With a powerful preparation of opium and stramonium prepared by his friend Cabanis, the famous physician, and which Condorcet had long carried about with him in his ring, he had cheated the guillotine. It was remembered afterwards, that, when he left the Suards' house, he had turned saying, "If I have one

night before me, I fear no man; but I will not be taken to Paris."

For many months the woman who loved him had no news of his death. She hoped against hope that he had escaped, and was in safety in Switzerland. To support her little household she took a fine linen shop in the Rue St. Honoré, and in the *entresol* set up her little studio where she continued her portrait-painting.

In January, 1794, for the good and safety of their child, she heroically petitioned the municipality for a divorce from her husband, and obtained it,—six weeks after his death. When the certain news of that death reached her, even her strong heart faltered. But Cabanis, her friend and doctor, who afterwards married her young sister, saved her for further effort and longer work. Full of courage and resignation she rose up again, wrote a preface to *THE PROGRESS OF THE HUMAN MIND*, educated her child, and when in 1795 some of her fortune was restored, immediately began paying the pensions which d'Alembert had asked Condorcet to give his old servants.

In latter days she had a little *salon* in Paris, saw her daughter happily married, and died in 1822. Through every stupendous change which France experienced between the fall of Robespierre and the death of Napoleon Bonaparte, she remained faithful to the principles to which her husband had devoted his genius and his life. Yet the Marquise de Condorcet had been, and had counted herself, a happy woman. Wrung with such sorrows as do not fall to the lot of many of her sex, she had had a blessing which is the portion of far fewer of them; she had inspired a great devotion, and had been worthy of it.

To Condorcet is meted now in some sort the same judgment as was

meted to him in life. Since he never gave himself blindly to any one faction, all factions have distrusted and condemned him. To the Royalist he is a Revolutionist; to the Revolutionist he is an aristocrat. The thinker cannot forgive him that his thought led him to deeds and words; the man of action and the orator cannot forget that he was thinker and dreamer to the end. While the Church can never pardon his persistent hostility to theology, his vehement opposition to Roman Catholicism, as the religion "where a few rogues make many dupes," his tolerance for Mahomedanism as less fatal to knowledge, the unbeliever is impatient with his serene faith in human kind, his unshattered trust in the goodness, not of God but, of man. Far in advance of his time,—in some respects of our time too—in his views on the rights of men and of women, on the education of children, and in his steady abhorrence of all interference with the freedom and openness of the understanding, he is still condemned for an idealism which admitted no compromise, and

for his passionate conviction that all errors are the fruit of bad laws. But he at least stands out clearly to any impartial observer as one of the very few whose lofty disinterestedness came unscorched through the fire of the Terror.

While in private life stern to duty and yet tenderer than any woman in his rare deep affections, with the noble face bespeaking, said Grimm, all gentle and peaceful qualities, perfectly modest and simple,—“as ready to talk ribbons and laces to a girl as metaphysics or history to a *savant*”—patient and strong with the fine endurance of steel and with the capacity, that capacity which is as rare as genius, for the highest form of human love, he showed a great character beside which even his great intellect seems a small thing and a mean. In that private character, and in the breadth and the generosity of his self-sacrifice for the public good, he remains for ever one of the noblest of the propagandists of the Revolution, one of the noblest of the sons of France.

S. G. TALLENTYRE.

